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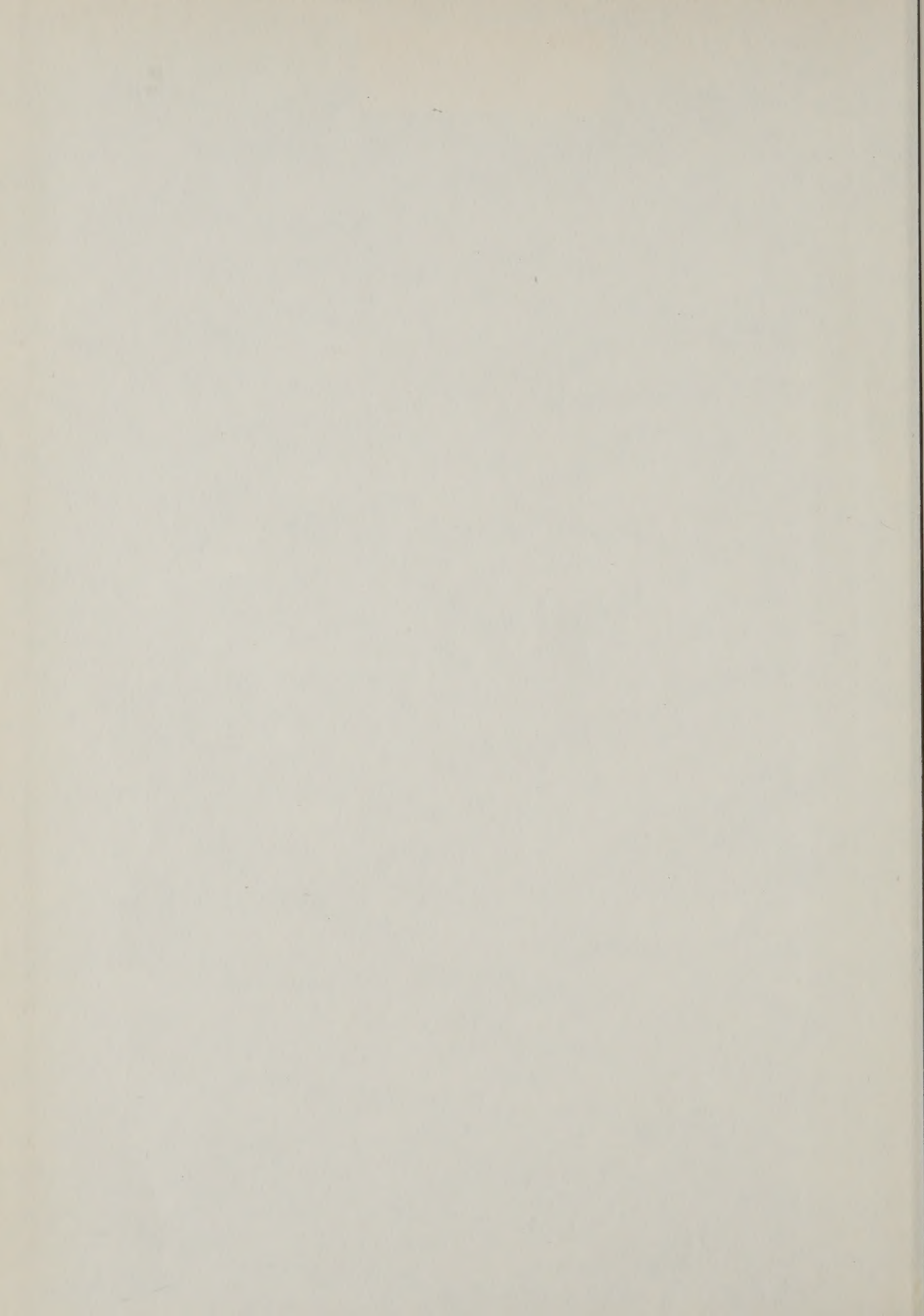


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**HISTORY OF  
TENNESSEE**

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# HISTORY OF TENNESSEE

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VOLUME II

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*Politics and Slavery, 1853-1860*

WHEN TENNESSEE WHIGS assembled in Nashville on April 25, 1853, to select a gubernatorial candidate, they reviewed with pride their achievements of the past two decades. For six straight presidential elections—since the defeat (in Tennessee) of the Old Hero's candidate in 1836—Whigs had carried Tennessee, and in nine gubernatorial elections they emerged victorious six times. Although their margin of victory in each contest was small, the Whigs, as long as they remained united, controlled Tennessee politics.

All was not well within party ranks, however. Internal dissension among leaders weakened the party, and some defections took place. Southern Whigs could not accept the antislavery utterances of such party stalwarts in the North as William H. Seward, and it was apparent that unless the slavery controversy could be terminated the national unity of the Whig party would be broken. In many states the party admittedly was disintegrating. In Tennessee, dissension over the Compromise of 1850, the Nashville Convention, the election of James C. Jones to the Senate in 1851, and the nomination of Scott in 1852 had caused considerable confusion and ill feeling among the leaders. Senators Bell and Jones had no love for each other, and a duel between Congressman Meredith P. Gentry\* and Jones had been "confidently expected." Gentry saw little chance for continued harmony in the party and inferred that "the Whig[s] . . . in Tennessee must reorganize or sink into insignificance." Bell expressed alarm at the trend and wrote Governor Campbell in February, 1853, that the party was breaking up.<sup>1</sup>

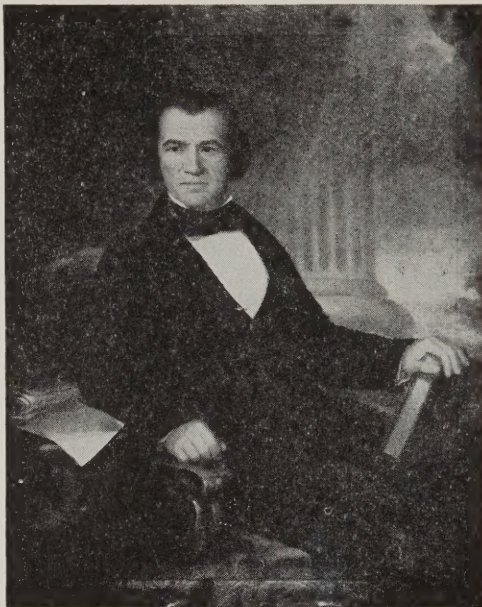
Despite the undercurrent of distrust and defeatism, Tennessee Whigs assembled in convention with "utmost harmony and feeling and devotion to the old Whig cause" and nominated Gustavus A. Henry, a Clarksville lawyer and grandson of Patrick Henry, as their gubernatorial standard bearer. According to the editor of the Nashville *True Whig*, the nomination was received with "entire unanimity and

\* In an oft-quoted-from speech, Gentry, in June, 1852, announced his retirement from Congress in disappointment over Fillmore's loss of nomination to Scott. He said, in part: "I will go home. In a sequestered valley in the State of Tennessee there is a smiling farm, with bubbling fountains, covered with rich pasturage, and fat flocks, and all that is needful for the occupation and enjoyment of a man of uncorrupted tastes. I will go there and pray for 'Rome.'" *Congressional Globe*, Appendix, 32 Cong., 1 sess., 712.

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hearty enthusiasm." His choice had come, however, only after Whigs had sought earnestly for a candidate. Governor Campbell, the popular choice, refused to make another canvass. General William T. Haskell of Jackson also refused the nomination, but he suggested Henry.<sup>2</sup>

Democrats a few days later selected Andrew Johnson from among a list of a half-dozen gubernatorial hopefuls. The East Tennessee tailor had had a phenomenal rise in Tennessee politics. Born in 1808 in Raleigh, North Carolina, of a poor family, Johnson was denied even the rudiments of a formal education.\* He was "bound out" to a local tailor at an early age, but several years later he ran away from his master, causing the latter to offer a ten dollar reward for his apprehension. In 1826 the seventeen-year-old boy and his widowed mother resolved to seek a new home across the mountains, and late in that year they arrived in Greeneville, where young Andrew established a tailor shop. Three years later he joined twenty-six others in a race for seven aldermanic positions in the flourishing town, and was the seventh man by a margin of four votes. Shortly thereafter he became mayor. He was elected to the house of representatives in 1835; defeated in his bid for reelection two years later, he was chosen again in 1839. In 1841 he began a term in the state senate. In 1843, pledging economy and reform in furtherance of the rights of the laborer, he entered the race for Congress and was elected. There he remained until his nomination for governor in 1853.<sup>3</sup>



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Andrew Johnson*

\* He became a resolute reader and, once in Congress, was given to making display of his literary knowledge, superficial though it was. In one speech on the Compromise of 1850, he referred to Shakespeare, Aesop's Fables, Epictetus, and Sir Walter Scott. Yet, he never acquired polish and often was crude. In the same speech, for example, he referred to former Speaker of the House R. C. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, as "this Boston codfish aristocrat." After Johnson's death, A. Y. Smith, of Tullahoma, who knew the East Tennessean during most of his public career, wrote that all his life Johnson exhibited the character of "a rough necked Mountaineer." *Congressional Globe*, Appendix, 31 Cong., 1 Sess., 670; "Personal Memoirs of A. Y. Smith," in possession of Bob Womack, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.



The campaign opened on June 1, at Sparta. There Johnson reaffirmed his pride in his plebeian origin and called upon all who earned a living by the sweat of the brow to support him. Henry bore the mark of an aristocrat, but he was unsurpassed as a speaker. For two months the doughty warriors conducted vigorous campaigns; Henry, the "Eagle Orator," used all the forensic skill and polish at his command, while Johnson counteracted with sledge hammer blows delivered with force, skill, and logic. The East Tennessean took full credit for the Homestead Bill, then pending in Congress, and favored constitutional amendments whereby the people might elect directly the President, Vice President, United States Senators, and justices of the United States Supreme Court. He frequently alluded to Henry's aristocratic origin, asserted that the Clarksvillian had voted (when a member of the legislature) against the best interests of mechanics, and excoriated him for his alleged refusal to honor Jackson and the heroes of New Orleans. The Eagle Orator delved deeply into Johnson's past and chided him for his obstructionist tactics when a member of the "immortal thirteen." He was also critical of Johnson's "White Basis" bill,\* which he alleged was in violation of the federal Constitution. He also charged the East Tennessean with abolitionist leanings.<sup>4</sup>

A record vote was cast on August 4, and for several days the decision was in doubt. The final count revealed that Johnson had received 63,413 votes to his opponent's 61,163, giving him a scant 2,250 majority. He lost both West and East Tennessee by small majorities but carried the middle division by a sufficient vote to win. It was largely a personal victory for Johnson, since mechanics, laborers, and small farmers flocked to his side. Henry lost some support in East Tennessee because of his savage attacks on Johnson, especially upon his white basis plan which the people favored. Furthermore, some Whigs of that section nursed grudges because of Jones' defeat of Thomas A. R. Nelson for the United States Senate in 1851, and because of Scott's nomination for President in 1852; therefore, some refused to vote, or else even voted for Johnson. The Whigs were still in positions of power, however. They elected five of the ten congressmen, and had a majority in the state house of representatives of 44 to 31. Democrats held control of the senate by the small margin of 13 to 12. Thus, in joint session, united Whigs could outvote their opponents 56 to 44.<sup>5</sup>

Johnson's support of education, agriculture, better penitentiary conditions, and better working conditions for mechanics and laborers in general has been discussed elsewhere. Other legislative accomplishments included appropriations to

\* When a member of the legislature in 1842, Johnson, in an apparent effort to build up support in East Tennessee for a congressional race which he anticipated making the following year, introduced a measure whereby congressional apportionment in Tennessee would be made without regard to the Negro population. This would deprive the slaveholding areas of Middle and West Tennessee of a population count equivalent to three-fifths of their Negro population, and thus would give more representation to East Tennessee. *Nashville True Whig*, June 2, 1853; *Senate Journal*, 1842, p. 15.



(Courtesy Greene County Chamber of Commerce)

*Greeneville—Andrew Johnson Tailor Shop*

increase the number of volumes in the state library and to create the office of librarian. The first State Agricultural and Mechanical Fair, which was to open a new era in the agricultural history of the state, was held in Nashville in October, 1854.<sup>6</sup>

John Bell's senatorial term expired in 1853, but the Whig legislative majority assured the party of continued control of the position. The question among Whig leaders was, who should receive the nomination? Thomas A. R. Nelson had entertained ambitions for a Senate seat for some time and was persuaded by Brownlow to oppose his (Nelson's) political idol, Bell. Henry's near-success in the gubernatorial contest of 1851 led him to believe that he might be elected, and Meredith P. Gentry also sought the seat. Bell became apprehensive and hastily dispatched Felix Zollicoffer, then in Congress, on an unsuccessful mission to dissuade Henry. Bell next appeared in Memphis at the Southern and Western Commercial Convention where he garnered support in West Tennessee by urging the construction of a railroad to the Pacific with Memphis as its western terminus. A caucus was called, but Nelson



refused to submit his claims to it, asserting that he had been falsely betrayed two years earlier when he was defeated by Jones. Bell, Henry, and Nelson were nominated on the floor of the legislature. Some Democrats voted for Bell, and the Middle Tennessean was chosen for a second term.<sup>7</sup>

The political calm which spread over the sections in the early winter of 1853-1854 was disrupted in February when the Kansas-Nebraska proposal was pushed forward, and the sectional caldron began to boil again. This measure repealed the Missouri Compromise and provided for the organization of Kansas and Nebraska as territories without restriction as to slavery. Discussion on the bill resolved itself into a partisan struggle, with Whigs generally opposed and Democrats in favor. Southern Democrats long had fought congressional intervention in the matter of slavery, and interpreted the measure as a concession to their section.<sup>8</sup>

Tennesseans in Congress joined in the debates, which soon became bitter squabbles. The two Whig Senators took opposite sides. James C. Jones—who apparently had gained in both weight and dignity and no longer was referred to as “Lean Jimmy”—favored the bill and was the first Tennessean to speak on the subject. Like many others, he did not believe slavery would be profitable in the Kansas-Nebraska area and he also believed that the Missouri Compromise had been unfair to the South. While he respected the men who had made the arrangement in 1820, he refused to be bound to a settlement which had “violated the rights and sovereignty of the states,” and which, if ever constitutionally sound, was now obsolete. To represent his constituents correctly, he exclaimed, he must vote for them, “not for the dead.” He excoriated Charles Sumner, Benjamin F. Butler, Salmon P. Chase, Ben Wade, Seward and other extremists for proclaiming themselves the God-ordained protectors of the “sacred” Missouri Compromise, while opposing all other compromises of sectional issues.\* Turning to Northern Whig Senators, he exclaimed, “Ask me to maintain association with you as a slave to your accursed fanaticism! I will not do it. . . .” He continued, indicating a declaration of independence from the party:

\* Especially galling to Jones and other Southerners was the “consistent inconsistency” of Sumner, Seward, and others of the North who unfortunately for the nation were being converted rapidly to the extreme abolitionist point of view. They now called the Missouri Compromise a “sacred and irrevocable compact, binding in honor, in conscience, and morals . . .” Yet, until then, when such a position was politically beneficial to the North, these men, and other Northern legislators, never had respected the Compromise. In 1821, when the arrangement was adopted, Northern legislators had opposed it by a sound majority, and shortly thereafter had sought to betray their trust by trying to admit Missouri as a free state anyway. A few years later, when Arkansas applied for admission, forty-nine Northern votes were recorded against admission as a slave state, even though the Compromise terms specifically provided for it. See Craven, *Coming of Civil War*, 335 ff.

I have always been a Whig from the honest convictions of my judgment; but I am told now, by resolutions passed by Whig meetings at the North, that a test of my devotion to that party is to be found in standing with the northern wing of the party, in opposition to the repeal of the Missouri restriction. Well, gentlemen, if this new test of fidelity and orthodoxy is to be applied to me, I am a heretic; and if I am to be doomed politically for that, you had better prepare your edict now. . . .<sup>9</sup>

Senator Bell urged postponement of the issue and called for moderation. "Wait a season," he exclaimed;

. . . be not so impatient to build up a great northwestern empire. In due time all your great plans of development will be accomplished, without any great sacrifices of any kind and without conflicting with any other great public interests. . . .

No advantage could accrue to either section, Bell continued; agitation of the subject only opened up "This bleeding wound of the country," and imparted "a stronger and deeper complexion to the anti-slavery sentiment. . . ." He announced that practically every Southern Senator expected to gain nothing from Kansas and Nebraska. Those who supported the measure were supporting it only because it implied equality among the states.<sup>10</sup>

In the House of Representatives, Tennesseans were divided just as they were in the Senate. William Cullom, Whig from Smith County, denounced the measure as the work of "politicians" who plotted "against the peace and quiet of the Union." He could see no one taking slaves to the "bleak hills of Nebraska or barren plains of Kansas" and described the idea as "ill-advised and dangerous." He called upon the people of the country to "rise up as one man and frown down this attempt to advance individual and party objects, under the flimsy pretext of doing justice to the South. . . ." Nathaniel Taylor, Whig from East Tennessee, spoke against the measure, especially against the repeal of "that sacred and solemn compact . . . made by our fathers, some of whom now sleep beneath the sod. . . ." Taylor, who only recently had been chosen to replace the deceased Brookins Campbell, had made a ten-weeks' canvass over the ten mountain counties he represented. His constituents were against the measure; he opposed it because it benefitted "no section," promised "no good even to the South," was "offensive to the moral sentiment of the North," and because he had found in it "only abundant signs of present and future mischief." Felix Zollicoffer of Nashville, and Charles Ready of Murfreesboro, were two Whigs who favored the measure. Zollicoffer believed Southerners should have "equal privileges of rights and occupancy with other parts of the country in the territories." Ready denied that the measure was a party issue and chided the North for not living up to the spirit of the



Missouri Compromise. Samuel A. Smith of Bradley County and Frederick P. Stanton of Shelby County were two Democrats who spoke in favor of the arrangement. Smith believed the territories "are the common property of all states" and that the South should have equal rights in them. Stanton believed that among the Southern people the conviction was "universal" that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional. He saw "nothing in the Constitution or the laws which justifies the putting of the stamp of irrepealability [*sic*] on anything done by Congress."<sup>11</sup>

The state press in the meantime joined in the controversy. The *Republican Banner* and *Nashville Whig* at first advised caution but soon aligned with the opposition. Its editorial stand was that Southerners had a right to take slaves into any territory and that slavery could be prohibited only by the legitimate settlers at the time of admission to the Union, not by "squatters" at the time of the organization of a territorial government. Slaveholders could never win a race with non slaveholders for the territory, because, the editor wrote, "before we could get up in the morning, eat our breakfast, yoke the oxen, and get off the darkies, the Yankees, with the assistance of the squatters, would possess the land. . . ." The Democratic press, apparently led by the *Nashville Union and American*, supported the measure, and emphasized "popular sovereignty" in deference to "squatter sovereignty." The *Nashville True Whig* and the *Columbia Intelligencer* were two Whig papers which supported Jones in his advocacy of the bill. In Memphis, the editor of the *Daily Appeal* also favored the measure, while the *Eagle and Enquirer* termed it "unwise and unnecessary." In Knoxville, Parson Brownlow denounced it as "infamous."<sup>12</sup>

The measure finally was enacted in May. In the Senate the vote was 37 to 14. Of the Tennessee Whigs, Senator Bell and Representatives Cullom, Emerson Etheridge of Weakley County, Taylor, and Robert M. Bugg of Giles County, opposed it, while Zollicoffer and Ready supported it. Of the Democrats, George W. Jones of Lincoln County, William M. Churchwell of Knox County, Samuel A. Smith of Bradley County, and Stanton, all favored it. Bell was the only Southern Whig in the Senate to oppose it, while the four Tennessee Whigs in the House were joined by only three other Southern Whigs.<sup>13</sup>

The controversy had been unfortunate from every angle and struck another blow upon the wedge which split the Union. Abolitionists, who, up to this point were viewed as crackpots and extremists, now began to take on respectability. Seward and others were able to convince many people in the North that not only was slavery wrong morally but that it actually hindered the movement of people into the great West, thus impeding "Manifest Destiny." Few Americans, imbued with pragmatic fervor, had been able to withstand so convincing an argument. The American Indian might be displaced—and in the debates John Bell had strongly criticized Northern enthusiasts for their championship of Negro "rights" while abusing the American-born Indian—but few seemed

to care. Seward's doctrine of the "Higher Law," later embraced by Lincoln and other Republicans, gave to the common man a respectable weapon with which to strike at slavery unlike anything the abolitionists had been able to provide. Slavery was not only morally wrong, but it was even worse—it impeded the God-intended progress meant for the American people. Its blighting effects robbed the Southern people of character and moral fiber, and to extend slavery into the West would carry its devastating effects there. The controversy, furthermore, was unfortunate in that it sounded the death-knell of the Whig party as a national organization. Many Southerners declared their independence of the party, and Benjamin F. Wade, speaking for the Northern Whigs, exclaimed during the debates, "We certainly cannot have any further political connection with the Whigs of the South; . . . an impassable gulf separates us, and must hereafter separate us."<sup>14</sup>

In Tennessee troubled waters were not calmed. During the course of the debates Churchwell and Cullom were saved from physical encounter only by the adroitness of the sergeant-at-arms. Bell and Jones had been praised and also excoriated by both public and press. The Democratic newspapers delighted in the Whig division, and the *Republican Banner* and *Nashville Whig* made a prophetic observation: "The vote in Congress on the Nebraska bill will be the great weapon which will be used by our Democratic opponents, . . . to cripple and destroy the Whig party in this state . . . [and] of the South."<sup>15</sup>

The controversy served to strengthen the Democratic party, as the Whigs appeared to offer little but disunity and confusion. At the same time Democrats began to take an even stronger pro-Southern position. This was especially true among Democrats in the western division who to a large extent identified themselves with the cotton economy of the deep South. In the middle section, E. G. Eastman, a fervent supporter of the Southern ultras, was editor of the recently consolidated *Nashville Union and American*, and his editorials were looked upon as "official" for Tennessee Democrats. Furthermore, states' rights Democrats, like Aaron Brown, Eastman, and others, had supported the victorious Franklin Pierce for the presidency and thus controlled a large share of the patronage in the state. Finally, many supporters of the strong Unionist sentiments of Jackson—"The Federal Union; it must be preserved"—were in their graves or too old to be effective. Thus after 1854 there could be little doubt but that "support of the Democratic party was synonymous with loyalty to southern institutions and southern unity." Democrats were to control the state from that time until the conservative resurgence of 1860, when they lost the presidential election to Constitutional Unionist John Bell.<sup>16</sup>

*The Know Nothing Movement*—The decline of the Whigs set the stage for the entrance of two new parties upon the American political scene. The Republican, organized in the North as a sectional, antislavery party, aroused



little interest in Tennessee. The American, or "Know Nothing,"\* however, drew a considerable following from Whigs and discontented Democrats, and for several years replaced the Whigs as the "second" party in Tennessee politics. The party had had its origin in the East where the wave of immigration between 1830 and 1850 had caused much dissatisfaction among laborers of the area. Many "native Americans" spoke of organizing a political party, the success of which they believed would give them an opportunity to limit the number of foreign laborers coming into the country. Since most Irish laborers were Catholics, their church was a target. The cardinal principles of the movement became, then, those of suppressing the influence of foreigners and Catholics. A convention had been called in Louisiana as early as 1841, and the movement soon spread over the country. The upheavals and general unrest during the revolutions of 1848 in Europe drove many foreigners to America, and supplied an added impetus to the movement. A "Native American" convention was called in Philadelphia in that year and pledged support to Zachary Taylor for President.<sup>17</sup>

In Tennessee, "Parson" Brownlow had attacked foreigners and Catholics as early as the 1830's, had prayed that the country might be "saved from the foreign influence and demagoguery of Democracy," and had warned the people of East Tennessee against Catholics in general. He had criticized President Polk for appointing Catholic chaplains during the Mexican War and accused the President and his friends of contributing over \$1,000 for the building of a new Catholic church in Washington. The Know Nothing party was now the answer to his prayers. He believed that "Divine Providence" had "raised up this new order to purify the land, and to perpetuate the civil and religious liberties of this country." He spoke the sentiments of many people. As one scholar has observed, "The fiery wave of nativism that swept over the North in 1853 and 1854 found fuel for a steady but hot glow when it crossed the ineffective barriers of Mason and Dixon's line." It offered a powerful and irresistible means for reorganization of the discredited Whigs.<sup>18</sup>

Tennesseans began seriously to think of forming a Know Nothing party. Although the secrecy of the organization makes it difficult to learn just when it made its appearance in the state, it is evident that by the summer of 1854, many people had embraced the party's principles. As early as June, 1854, the editor of the *Nashville Union and American* suspected an increasing membership, called upon "all good citizens to discourage it," and believed it to be "the greatest danger to which a republic can be subjected." The editorial apparently had little effect, however, since soon thereafter party strength was reported in

\* The organization was formed as a secret oathbound group, but members could recognize each other by signs. If a member were asked by an "outsider" what the organization stood for, he was instructed to answer, "I don't know." Hence, they came to be designated, derisively, as "Know Nothings."

Nashville, Memphis, Murfreesboro, and other towns. Memphians even elected a Know Nothing mayor. Strength also could be observed in the rural counties. Marshall County boasted of membership of "over 1,400," and "considerable strength" was reported in Wilson and other counties.<sup>19</sup>

J. R. Graves, the militant Baptist Defender of "Old Landmarkism,"\* for once in his life joined Brownlow in a cause—he, too, welcomed the new party. In August, 1854, in a *Tennessee Baptist* editorial he expressed great joy that the Know Nothings were organizing in Nashville. He believed that "the party will spread with great rapidity throughout the State. . . ." He had observed with horror that "nearly one million per annum of foreign Catholics and German infidels,—who, though opposed in all else, are agreed in the subversion of our free institutions—are pouring in upon us, and the tide is increasing." He believed that if Catholics ever gained "an immense numerical majority, then religious freedom in America would end." He embraced the party, congratulated the American people for arising to the evil which surrounded them, and predicted a great future for Americanism.<sup>20</sup>

In the autumn of 1854 additional Know Nothing victories were announced. The September elections in Nashville brought Americans, dissatisfied Democrats, and Whigs together to elect W. B. Shapard as mayor. The mayor-elect had been a Democrat, but recently he had embraced Know Nothing principles and thus welcomed the party's support. Shortly thereafter came reports of Know Nothing successes in Lawrenceburg, Clarksville, and Loudon.<sup>21</sup>

To Whigs, looking for a new outer garment in which to appear before the people, the aura of irresistible attraction which surrounded the novel party seemed to meet their needs. Although James C. Jones and other "old fashioned, old school, Henry Clay" Whigs remained cool toward the party, the majority of the Whigs saw in the new organization an opportunity to remain alive politically. They united with dissatisfied Democrats and various political newcomers who sincerely believed that the Know Nothings offered to Tennesseans for the first time in a generation a new order of honesty, decency, and morality, and heartily embraced it.<sup>22</sup>

By the late autumn of 1854 it was evident that the gubernatorial campaign of 1855 would be fought, not between Democrats and Whigs, but between Democrats and Americans. The preponderance of county Democratic endorsements assured the nomination for Johnson, and he was chosen unanimously at the March convention held in Nashville. No Whig or American convention was held, but Whig papers widely heralded the name of Meredith P. Gentry\*\* as an opposition candidate who could defeat Johnson. Consequently,

\* See Chapter 22 for a further discussion of Old Landmarkism.

\*\* Gentry will be remembered as the old-line Whig who parted company with the Whigs shortly after the nomination of Scott in 1852. Before this time he had served for four years in the general assembly and twelve years in Congress. In both legislative halls he was recognized as a man of ability and one of Tennessee's ablest orators.



Gentry announced from his Bedford County home that the "overwhelming support" expressed in newspapers and private correspondence had convinced him that he should become a candidate for governor.<sup>23</sup>

The campaign opened on May 1 at Murfreesboro. Johnson had failed to carry Rutherford County two years before, and the audience was hostile to him when he opened the campaign for reelection. Nevertheless, he hacked away at his protagonist as with a broadaxe. The Know Nothing party he believed to be an ally "of the prince of darkness—the devil, his satanic majesty." Know Nothing supporters shouted in unison, "It's a lie," when the Governor exclaimed, "Show me the dimensions of a Know-Nothing, and I will show you a huge reptile, upon whose neck the foot of every honest man ought to be placed. I would as soon be found in the clan of John A. Murrell as in a Know-Nothing council." Johnson paused only when he heard the cocking of pistols, but he was permitted to conclude his two-hour speech unharmed. In his reply to the Governor, Gentry, who always used the rapier but never the broadaxe, refused to place his oratorical weapon in Johnson's vitals and made only a mild, "gentlemanly," reply to the East Tennessean's attack. His friends went away disappointed and discouraged. When urged by leading party members to intensify his campaign by making attacks in kind upon his opponent, Gentry refused to "denounce Johnson as a scoundrel," and explained that he could not "degrade . . . [his] manhood, even if Johnson did." The opposition press frequently referred to Johnson as a demagogue, and, judging from the tactics which the Governor employed, the accusation was not far afield.<sup>24</sup>

For nearly two months the candidates canvassed the state and discussed such matters as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, prohibition, education, and other questions which also had arisen two years before. Although Gentry apparently preferred to stick to major issues, Johnson stressed the "evils" of "Know Nothingism." Throughout his political life he had entertained strong convictions about the separation of church and state, and saw in the Know Nothing movement a menace to a constitutional guarantee. Gentry's illness, brought on by the strenuous nature of the campaign, halted the joint debates on August 26, one week before the contest closed.<sup>25</sup>

Balloting resulted in Johnson's reelection.\* The Governor's majority had been cut from that of two years before, and he had been badly beaten in his home section of East Tennessee. Gentry also carried the western division, but, as in 1853, it was the Middle Tennessee vote which saved Johnson from defeat. Just as in 1853, Johnson's opponent in this election made tactical errors which hurt his cause. Gentry had never considered himself a member of the Know Nothing party, and his failure to defend the organization against

\* The vote was 67,499 to 65,342, giving Johnson a majority of 2,157. *Senate Journal*, 1855, p. 43; *House Journal*, 1855, pp. 85-86.

Johnson's onslaughts caused some party members to become cool toward him. Many Democrats, fully dissatisfied with Johnson, would have supported Gentry had he made a stronger case for himself and the party. Another factor in Gentry's defeat was that many old-line Whigs disliked him because he had refused to support Scott in 1852 and had issued what amounted to a declaration of independence from his party. When he had departed for his "sequest-



(Courtesy Greene County Chamber of Commerce)

*Greeneville—Andrew Johnson Monument*

ered valley" in 1853 many people thought that he intended to retire, and they criticized him for changing his mind. Finally, James C. Jones, bitter enemy of Gentry, exerted whatever influence he had to defeat the candidate.<sup>26</sup>

Despite the loss of the gubernatorial race, the Americans were jubilant because they had elected six of the ten Congressmen and also because they could outvote the Democrats fifty-one to forty-nine in the general assembly. When the legislature assembled in October, Know Nothing Senator Edward S. Cheatham was elected speaker on the second ballot. In the house, forty-



nine ballots were required before Americans and Whigs could elect former Governor Neill S. Brown as speaker.\*<sup>27</sup>

The bitterness of the campaign was reflected in the action taken by the legislators. Know Nothing senators refused to confirm various appointments of the governor and introduced bills designed to shear him of some of his appointive powers. Only after the house members indicated that excessively partisan measures had little chance of passage did the sessions become more harmonious.<sup>28</sup>

During Johnson's second administration the Hermitage property was purchased by the state. It consisted of Jackson's residence and 500 acres. Six per cent coupon bonds amounting to \$48,000 were issued in payment. The property then was tendered to the federal government on the condition that a military academy similar to the one at West Point should be established there. When Johnson delivered his last message to the legislature in 1857 he reported that the tender had been made and that "the proposition at the time, so far as it could be ascertained, seemed to be favorably entertained by both houses of Congress."\*\*\*<sup>29</sup>

The colorful career of William Walker, the "grey-eyed man of destiny" who sought to carve for himself an empire in Central America, reached a high point during Johnson's second administration, and the former Nashville physician was honored throughout the state and nation. As a young man the future filibusterer had been educated at the University of Nashville and at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. Dissatisfied with the practice of his profession, the young adventurer saw in the country south of the United States a fertile field for conquest. When the Mexican government refused him permission to settle a small colony in Lower California, he nevertheless invaded the peninsula with a band of forty-five men (the "First Independence Battalion"), and on November 8, 1853, proclaimed himself President of a new "Republic of Lower California." A hostile Mexican army soon appeared, however, and within a few months had chased him across the border. There he was arrested for violation of the neutrality laws but soon was acquitted.<sup>30</sup>

Walker's attention next fell upon the Central American republics, which he considered nothing more than pawns of the imperial interests of Great Britain and the United States. He determined to secure them as slaveholding territory for the United States and to reap a fortune for himself and his

\* The former governor defeated Daniel Donelson, Andrew Jackson Donelson's brother, by one vote.

\*\* The United States government refused to act on the offer. Two additional years were given the government in 1858, but again the Congress "failed to signify its acceptance . . . on the terms provided." *Appendix to Senate and House Journals, 1859-1860*, p. 132.

backers. Therefore he appeared in Nicaragua in 1855, placed himself at the head of the Liberal party by sheer force of character and soon defeated the opposition. In May, 1856, Walker, at the head of the army, secured recognition from the United States of his *de facto* government, and a few months later he was officially inaugurated President of the Republic of Nicaragua. As head of the new regime he visited his home state and country and was received with enthusiasm. Thousands of Nashvillians cheered him as he rode through the streets in a handsome carriage. He was well received in Memphis, where citizens pledged and collected several hundred dollars for his support in Nicaragua.<sup>31</sup>

Walker's career as a Central American executive, however, soon was cut short by another American. Commodore William H. Vanderbilt's Accessory Transit Company, established in 1854, soon reaped a fortune for the tycoon, since Vanderbilt had a monopoly on transportation across Nicaragua. The liberals of that country, seeking the Commodore's expulsion, offered free land to Americans who would come and join their forces. This offer appealed to businessmen in New York and San Francisco who provided Walker with ample funds for his exploits. Once in power, the Nashville filibusterer had Vanderbilt's concessions cancelled and transferred to a company in which he (Walker) had a large financial interest. Vanderbilt countered by supporting the president of Costa Rica, who, resenting Walker's intrusion into Central American affairs, succeeded in chasing him out (1857). The Nashvillian made two attempts to regain his power but was unsuccessful. In his last try he sought to wage war on Honduras, whose conservative government had joined his Nicaraguan enemies and jointly made war against him. He was finally captured in 1860 by a British man-of-war, and turned over to his enemies. On September 16, 1860, he was executed by a firing squad of Hondurans.<sup>32</sup>

The presidential election of 1856 overshadowed everything else during Johnson's administration, as far as the political interests of the people were concerned. The Know Nothing party in Tennessee began to prepare as early as August 25 when they met in Nashville to outline strategy for the following year. Brownlow declared that "never . . . since the . . . Revolution . . . [were] the civil and religious liberties of the country . . . so much endangered. . . ." To keep the party before the people, he published a book entitled *Americanism Contrasted with Foreignism, Romanism, and Bogus Democracy, in the Light of Reason, History and Scripture; in which certain Demagogues in Tennessee, and elsewhere, are Shown up in their true Colors*.<sup>\*</sup> Later, in another meeting, Tennessee Know Nothings welcomed into the fold Andrew Jackson Donelson, and took a stand in favor of the abolition of secrecy at the 1856 convention.<sup>33</sup>

When the Americans assembled for a nominating convention in Phila-

\* Nashville, 1856.



delphia in February, 1856, there was a noticeable lack of harmony. The slavery question again had arisen to push Northern and Southern members apart; in fact, the editor of a Nashville Democratic organ had announced several months earlier that slavery had divided the new party just as it did the Whigs. Only after several delegates from both North and South had walked out in despair was the nomination of Millard Fillmore made. Sam Houston, who openly had sought the nomination, received only three votes. Andrew Jackson Donelson, Jackson's nephew and former personal secretary, was named the vice-presidential candidate. Donelson had been an active Democrat, and his defection sorely irritated party leaders. To the Know Nothings he became the hero of the hour, but he was branded as a traitor by Tennessee Democrats.<sup>34</sup>

Tennessee Democrats, who had supported as possible vice-presidential candidates two favorite sons—Johnson and Aaron V. Brown—accepted without question James C. Buchanan and John C. Breckinridge as their standard bearers. Johnson and other Democrats campaigned extensively for the nominees, although the Governor had considerable doubts about Buchanan's chances for success.<sup>35</sup>

The "Black Republicans" did not select an electoral ticket in Tennessee because they realized the hopelessness of their cause. The *Union and American*, however, accused the Know Nothings of being in league with the "nigger stealers" of the North, who opposed the best interests of the South.<sup>36</sup>

Interestingly, two Whigs of long standing—Bell and Jones—assumed strong positions on opposite sides. Jones by this time was convinced that the success of the Republicans could only mean a dissolution of the Union and that a vote for the Know Nothing party would only help the Republicans to power. Therefore, on August 9, 1856, in a speech in the Senate he announced his support of Buchanan and his affiliation with the Democratic party. "I know I am separating from those who have cherished me," he said, but he saw in the Democratic party a chance for fair treatment of all sections. He continued: "I am an oldline Whig; and in voting with . . . [the Democrats] it is not because I love Democracy, but because I hate Black Republicanism. . . . I believe the safety of the country depends on the success of the Democratic party at this time." He returned to Memphis shortly thereafter in the interest of Buchanan and was feted with a barbecue and a celebration. There he declared to a large audience that if Frémont were elected Tennessee and the rest of the South would be justified in seceding from the Union. In September, 1855, Bell had addressed a mass meeting in Knoxville where he endorsed the "great and leading principles" of the American party, but denied that he was a member of it. In the following year he was mentioned as a possibility for the Know Nothing presidential nomination, and Brownlow placed Bell's name at the masthead of his Knoxville newspaper. Bell's great hope was to prevent secession, and he supported the party whose success, he believed,

would assure the preservation of the Union. He doubted Buchanan's ability to keep the Southern ultras from plunging the country into war and believed that a Frémont victory would only "bring on a fearful crisis."<sup>37</sup>

The November election brought victory to the Democrats, both in the state and on the national scene. For the first time since 1832 the party of Jackson had won a presidential election in Tennessee. For the first time West Tennesseans deserted their old political alliance with East Tennesseans and joined the voters of the middle division to give the Democrats a resounding victory. Buchanan's margin was nearly 7,500.\* The name of Andrew Jackson Donelson had not saved the state for the Know Nothings, and some observers likened the resounding defeat to a death knell for the party. Brownlow, greatly discouraged, admitted prematurely that the party was "utterly vanquished—demolished."<sup>38</sup>

*Campaign of 1857*—The defeat in 1856 left the Americans with little enthusiasm for a gubernatorial campaign in 1857. Nevertheless, they were able to rationalize their plight and in April they chose Robert Hatton of Wilson County—the "Demosthenes of the great American Whig-Know Nothing party"—as their candidate. Democrats, in the meantime, had nominated Isham G. Harris, of Shelby County, after Johnson declined a third term. The Americans announced a platform of ten planks, and the heated campaign centered largely around the platform. Nativism was pushed aside, and the more popular issues of slavery and of equal distribution of federal lands among the states were warmly debated. The campaign opened at Camden on May 25, and closed two months later when Harris and Hatton spoke in Nashville. Two weeks remained before the August 6 election, but the two candidates, suffering from "the continuous and arduous labors of the canvass," mutually agreed to cancel their remaining appointments.<sup>39</sup>

Harris received a majority of 11,371,\*\* and Democrats also won majorities in the house and senate. It was a Democratic landslide, but it did not mean the end of a two-party system. Remnants of Whigs, Know Nothings, and anti-administration Democrats now united under the name "Opposition Party," and continued to harass the triumphant party of Jackson.<sup>40</sup>

Johnson was assured election to the Senate, because the Democrats in legislative convention could muster a majority of twenty. When the legislature convened he was chosen over Neill S. Brown by a 57 to 38 vote. Jones, who now considered himself a Democrat, did not seek reelection. Jubilant Democrats also observed that Bell's term would expire in 1859; therefore they proceeded to choose A.O.P. Nicholson to replace him. The *Republican Banner* and other

\* Buchanan received 73,636 to his opponent's 66,178.

\*\* Harris received 71,178 votes to Hatton's 59,807. *House Journal*, 1857, pp. 61-62; *Senate Journal*, 1857, pp. 58-59.



Whig papers alleged that such action was unconstitutional, since the Constitution provided for the selection of Senators every six years. Victorious Democrats were in no mood for delay, however, and despite the fact that Senator R. C. Saunders of Smith County "took his hat" and walked out exclaiming that it was "unconstitutional," they proceeded with the election and called upon Bell to resign. Brownlow was humiliated beyond all measure that "A.O.P. X.Y.Z. Nicholson" and that "unmitigated liar . . . and villainous coward" (Andrew Johnson) should represent Tennessee in the United States Senate. "Think of Andrew Johnson occupying the seat filled in days gone by by John Williams, Hugh L. White, Felix Grundy, and more recently by John Bell," he exclaimed in derision.<sup>41</sup>

*Election of 1859*—The Opposition party chose John Netherland of Hawkins County as its standard bearer, and Democrats renominated Harris. By this time the national crisis overshadowed all state issues, and the sixty-five debates between the candidates were heard by audiences tense with excitement. Harris tried to tie Netherland's supporters to abolitionists of the North. He told the people that a vote for his opponent was a vote against the South. Netherland, however, accused Harris of raising the abolition issue—of crying "nigger, nigger"—simply to get votes, and disclaimed any connection with the hated radical element of the North. Netherland pledged "unwavering firmness" in maintaining slavery under the Constitution and believed that the rights and interests of all sections of the country should be preserved.<sup>42</sup>

Harris was again victorious, but his majority of 8,031 was cut considerably from what it was two years before.\* Although the Opposition party failed to gain majorities in the legislature, their congressional candidates won seven of the ten seats. Old-line Whigs, jubilant at the life shown by the Opposition party, began to make plans for future elections. Bell believed that the Democrats had reached the height of their power and were now on the downgrade, and Brownlow was confident that his party could win both the gubernatorial race and a majority in the legislature in 1861.<sup>43</sup>

\* The totals were as follows: Harris, 76,073; Netherland, 68,042. *House Journal*, 1859-1860, p. 57.

## CHAPTER XXV—NOTES

1. Cole, *Whig Party*, 262-63, 271; Joseph H. Parks, "The Tennessee Whigs and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill," *Journal of Southern History*, X (August, 1944), 308-10; Robert L. Hargis, "The Know Nothing Party in Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1931), 1ff.; *Nashville Union*, February 21, 1853; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 510; W. Darrell Overdyke, *The Know Nothing Party in the South* (University, Louisiana, 1950), 45 ff.

2. Nashville *True Whig*, January 12, March 15, April 26, 1853; W. M. Caskey, "First Administration of Governor Andrew Johnson," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 1 (1929), 43-45.
3. In the late 1920's four scholars prepared works on Johnson. Robert W. Winston's *Andrew Johnson, Plebeian and Patriot* (New York, 1928), was first to be published. In the following year the MacMillan Company brought out Lloyd Paul Stryker's *Andrew Johnson, A Study in Courage* (New York, 1929), and the East Tennessee Historical Society printed in its *Publications* Caskey's article on Johnson's first administration as governor. In 1930 was published George Fort Milton's readable *The Age of Hate: Andrew Johnson and the Radicals* (New York, 1930). In the same year Caskey's article, "The Second Administration of Governor Andrew Johnson," appeared in Number 2 of the *E.T.H.S. Publications*, 34-54. Several earlier works had already appeared, including the Reverend James S. Jones' *Life of Andrew Johnson* (Greeneville, 1901), and C. R. Hall's *Andrew Johnson, Military Governor of Tennessee* (Princeton, 1916).  
A reproduction of the original advertisement, from the Raleigh *Star*, offering a ten dollar reward for Apprentice Johnson's apprehension appears in Milton's *Age of Hate*, between pages 44 and 45; also in Winston's *Andrew Johnson*, between pages 24 and 25.
4. White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 514; St. George L. Sioussat, "Andrew Johnson and the Early Phases of the Homestead Bill," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, II (December, 1918), 253 ff.; *Daily Union and American*, June 3, 16, 1853; Caskey, "First Administration of Andrew Johnson," 49; *True Whig*, June 2, 1853.
5. *Senate Journal*, 1853-1854, p. 47; *House Journal*, 1853-1854, p. 50; Caskey, "First Administration of Andrew Johnson," 50; J. Milton Henry, "The Tennessee Conservatives and Secession, 1847-1861" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1951), 114.
6. Nashville *Daily Gazette*, October 13, 1854.
7. Edd Winfield Parks, "Zollicoffer: Southern Whig," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (December, 1952), 351; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 115; Alexander, *Nelson*, 46; Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell*, 278-79, 280-81; "Tennessee Whigs and Kansas-Nebraska Bill," 311-14.
8. Campbell, "Tennessee and the Union" (article), 79; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 117.
9. Joseph H. Parks, "Tennessee Whigs and Kansas-Nebraska Bill," 316; Avery Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War*, (Chicago, 1942, 1957), 336; *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 sess., 340-43; *ibid.*, Appendix, 1040.
10. *Ibid.*, Appendix, 409; Cole, *Whig Party*, 294; Craven, *The Growth of Southern Nationalism* (Vol. VI of *A History of the South*, University, Louisiana, 1953), 194-95.
11. *Ibid.*, 193; *Congressional Globe*, Appendix, 33 Cong., 1 sess., 538-43, 584-87, 720-23, 741-45, 811-16.
12. *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, March 7, 1854; Craven, *Southern Nationalism*, 199; Joseph H. Parks, "Tennessee Whigs and Kansas-Nebraska Bill," 321, 323; *Memphis Daily Appeal*, April 24, August 3, 1854; *Memphis Eagle and Enquirer*, July 1, 15, August 4, 1854.
13. *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 sess., 532 (Senate vote), 1254 (House vote).
14. *Ibid.*, Appendix, 764; Craven, *Coming of Civil War*, 340 ff.
15. *Congressional Globe*, 33 Cong., 1 sess., 1441-44, 1450-51, 1465; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 126; *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, June 2, 1854.



16. *Memphis Daily Appeal*, July 21, 25, 26, 27, 1854; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 134.
17. Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 34.
18. Coulter, *William G. Brownlow*, 122 ff.; Verton M. Queener, "The Pre-Civil War Period of the Life of Brownlow," (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1930), 154-55; *Knoxville Whig*, October 7, 1854, as cited in Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 137; Cole, *Whig Party*, 315; Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 47, 57; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, Chapter 31.
19. Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 66-67; Murray B. Measamer, "A History of the Know Nothing Party in Tennessee" (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 20 ff.; Gohmann, *Nativism in Tennessee*, 88 ff.; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 615; Cole, *Whig Party*, 315; *Nashville Union and American*, June 15, 1854; *Murfreesboro News*, quoted in *ibid.*; *Nashville Gazette*, August 12, 1854.
20. Graves quoted in William G. Brownlow, *The Great Iron Wheel Examined, or Its False Spokes Extracted, and an Exhibition of Elder Graves, Its Builder* (Nashville, 1856), 288-89.
21. Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 68; Gohmann, *Nativism in Tennessee*, 88; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 615; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 496.
22. Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell*, 311-12; Cole, *Whig Party*, 316.
23. Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 37.
24. Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 498, 500; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 120-21; O. P. Temple, *Notable Men of Tennessee, from 1833 to 1875* (New York, 1912), 385-86.
25. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 320-22; Temple, *Notable Men*, 388.
26. *Ibid.*; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 613, 628-30; Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 42.
27. Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 76; White (ed.), *Messages*, IV, 630-31.
28. *Nashville Daily Union and American*, October 13, 1855; Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 54.
29. *Senate Journal*, 1857, pp. 30-31; *House Journal*, 1857, pp. 31-32.
30. Alfred Barnaby Thomas, *Latin America, A History* (New York, 1956), 595, 619; Hargis, "Know Nothing Party," 2; William O. Scroggs (ed.), "With Walker in Nicaragua; The Reminiscences of Elleanore (Callaghan) Raterman," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (December, 1915), 315-330. For a complete account of Walker's activities, see Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers: The Story of William Walker and His Associates* (New York, 1916), 9 ff.
31. McRaven, *Nashville*, 51-53; Thomas, *Latin America*, 595, 619; Hargis, "Know Nothing Party," 66; *Nashville Patriot*, May 19, November 19, 1856.
32. *Ibid.*; Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 270 ff., 368 ff.
33. *Nashville Gazette*, August 26, 1855; Gohmann, *Nativism in Tennessee*, 128.
34. *Ibid.*, 107, 130, 132; Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 136; Hargis, "Know Nothing Party," 64; Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 47 ff.; Measamer, "Know Nothing Party in Tennessee," 103.
35. Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 47-49; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 144.
36. *Nashville Union and American*, August 22, 1856.
37. *Congressional Globe*, 34 Cong., 1 sess., 2013; Osborn, "James Chamberlain Jones," 333-34; Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell*, 304, 311; Measamer, "Know Nothing Party in Tennessee," 103.
38. Brownlow quoted in Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 149.
39. Caskey, "Second Administration of Andrew Johnson," 52-53; Overdyke, *Know*

- Nothing Party*, 266-67; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 324-25; Gohmann, *Nativism in Tennessee*, 144 ff.; Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell*, 315; James Vaulx Drake, *Life of General Robert Hatton, Including His Most Important Public Speeches; Together with Much of His Washington and Army Correspondence* (Nashville, 1867), 126-47.
40. Overdyke, *Know Nothing Party*, 267; Joseph H. Parks, *John Bell*, 316.
41. *House Journal*, 1857, pp. 36, 92; *Republican Banner and Nashville Whig*, September 19, 1857; Winston, *Andrew Johnson*, 89; Milton, *Age of Hate*, 91; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 121; *Knoxville Whig*, October 17, 1851.
42. Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 105; Hamer, *Tennessee*, I, 513-14; Hargis, "Know Nothing Party," 105.
43. Gohmann, *Nativism in Tennessee*, 155; *Nashville Patriot*, August 19, 1859; *Senate Journal*, 1859-1860, pp. 38-39.



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## CHAPTER XXVI

### *War Clouds, 1860-1861*

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**S** ECESSION SENTIMENT INCREASES—Doctor James G. M. Ramsey, eminent East Tennessee physician and historian, wrote as early as 1858 that he could “conceal from no one” his “deep conviction that the days of our present Union are . . . numbered.” Northern people had degenerated, he believed; in place of the once “high toned New-England spirit” was only corruption, covetousness, and selfishness. On the other hand, in the South the “proud Cavalier spirit,” the “virtue and integrity of the Huguenot,” and the “probity and honor of the Presbyterian” had been intensified. “We are essentially two people,” he said, as he concluded that a nation so divided could not stand. The majority of Tennesseans at that time did not share Ramsey’s pessimism. Except for a few extremists, the people had accepted the Compromise of 1850 in good faith, and while few if any acquiesced in Daniel Webster’s claim of an “indissoluble union,” they saw no imminent danger of division in the nation as then constituted. The majority believed that, although the reins of government temporarily were in unfriendly hands, the ultimate victory lay with the “real” Union of constitutional government and equality for all the states. Disunion was not seriously considered, and Tennessee remained virtually free of secession propaganda until 1860.<sup>1</sup>

The fear of “Black Republicanism” and its concomitant threats to slavery of course was present before the sixties. Tennessee was a slave state with millions of dollars invested in Negroes, and slaveholders hated the party which encouraged operation of the “Underground Railroad.” The “Railroad” alone, according to the editor of the *Nashville Union and American*, had carried thousands of blacks into free territory and had destroyed “tens of thousands” in property values. Further, the editor wrote, Negro servants accompanying Southern travellers in the North were “beset by a body of hounds who . . . actually force . . . [them] to run away.”<sup>2</sup> To most Tennesseans, the Republican party was synonymous with abolitionism. One editor asserted that “Abolitionist-Republicans” had been “objects of ridicule” in both North and South until they began to gain “respectability” by their agitation of the slavery question.\* Another claimed

\* To describe another as an “Abolitionist” was the greatest of insults. In November, 1859, Allen A. Hall, editor of the *Nashville News* (an Opposition paper) shot and killed George G. Poindexter, editor of the *Union and American*, because Poindexter had accused his assailant of abolitionist leanings.

that many Republican leaders were cheap political opportunists who would foment sectional strife, even to the point of destroying the nation, if such appeared expedient in their quest for power. William H. Seward seemed to Southern spokesmen to typify their conception of a Republican abolitionist and he became their special target because of his scathing and persistent verbal attacks on slavery. In October, 1858, he had asserted that war between the two sections was inevitable—an idea which became known as Seward's "irrepressible conflict" doctrine and which was taken up by other Northern Republicans. To Tennesseans, the vast majority of whom believed coexistence was possible, the statement was a "bomb-shell fired by a fanatic." It caused the few East Tennessee Republicans to repudiate their newly-adopted party, and inspired Democrats to make slavery one of the major issues in the gubernatorial campaign of 1859. The Tennessee legislature branded the doctrine "infamous," and called upon "national men of all parties throughout the Union" to do their duty by uniting to crush "its authors as traitors to their country and as deadly enemies to the public peace, the rights of the States, and the preservation of our Republican Institutions."<sup>3</sup>

Many people blamed Seward for John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry (October, 1859)—an event which a Nashville editor described as "one of the most daring and reckless affairs which ever took place in this country." Andrew Johnson, then in the United States Senate, placed full blame for the incident upon Republican leaders. He ridiculed Republican contentions that Thomas Jefferson had considered Negroes and whites as equals, pointed to inequalities between blacks and whites in Northern states, and urged Republicans to cease their agitation of the question. The state legislature deplored the raid and placed the blame upon "the head of the Black Republican party, William H. Seward," whose "treasonable policy" might yet sound the death knell of the Union. In Campbell County local Democrats pronounced the Brown episode "an outrage upon Southerners" and threatened secession unless Southern states were given "equality in the Union." In Knoxville, Opposition leaders condemned the raid, as did members of both parties in other Tennessee towns. In Pennsylvania, a group of Tennessee medical students withdrew from school when a professor remarked that the death penalty for Brown might be too severe, and hastened to the medical department of the University of Nashville. Beyond question the unfortunate raid weakened the case of the strong Unionists in Tennessee and brought into the open secession talk by a few extremists. It also ended any possibility for cooperation between Republicans and Southern Opposition party members.<sup>4</sup>

As late as 1860 the vast majority of Tennesseans still abhorred the idea of secession. A militant minority coalesced early in that year, however, which despaired of reconciliation with the North except upon terms dictated by abolitionists—terms which they of course would not accept. Governor Isham G.





(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Cossitt Library*

Harris with aroused emotions told legislators early in January that, although he hoped “wise, temperate, and calm, firm counsel may avert the impending evils,” he believed nevertheless in the right of revolution and feared that the right would have to be exercised “in case the reckless fanatics of the North should secure control of the government.” Before the year was over Harris became the nominal head of the secessionists in Tennessee.<sup>5</sup>

*Election of 1860*—When Tennessee Democrats met in Nashville in January to prepare for the national convention to be held in Charleston in April, their mood was not a conciliatory one. They condemned Seward’s irrepressible conflict doctrine, indicted the Republican party for “its hostility to . . . slavery . . . , its war upon the Constitution and upon the rights of the States,” and warned that “if this war upon the Constitutional rights of the South is persisted in it must soon cease to be a war of words.” They proceeded to endorse the Dred

Scott decision and President Buchanan's administration. Andrew Johnson was their choice for the nomination.<sup>6</sup>

The Opposition group met one month later, on Washington's birthday. There in the state's capital, "Know Nothing, American, Whig, and Opposition Friends" met together and formed a "Grand National Union party." They did not draft a formal platform, but pledged themselves to support the Constitution and the Union. They also deplored the agitation of the slavery controversy. John Bell, the Conservative leader in the state, was nominated for the presidency. His "superior qualifications, . . . broad and expansive patriotism," and his "unswerving devotion to the Union and the Constitution" rendered him the man best suited to lead the country through what appeared to be the perilous days ahead.<sup>7</sup>

Immediately after the convention William G. Brownlow and twenty-nine other prominent leaders from among the old Whigs and Know Nothings issued an appeal addressed "To the People of the United States." The signatories believed that neither Democrats nor Republicans could be "safely entrusted with the management of public affairs" and urged conservative elements in all the states to support a new party which respected states rights and revered the Union. The movement spread rapidly, and Tennessee Unionists helped Conservatives in other states to organize a national Union party. In Cincinnati, Louisville, Philadelphia, and elsewhere dinners were given in honor of Balie Peyton, Thomas A. R. Nelson, Horace Maynard, and others, who made speeches against secession. Newspapers in Philadelphia, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Nashville, Knoxville, and other cities raised the standard for John Bell of Tennessee.<sup>8</sup>

Such was the situation when Democrats met in convention at Charleston, South Carolina, on April 23. Delegates from the eighteen free states hoped to choose Stephen A. Douglas as the Democratic candidate, but those from the fifteen slave states had grown wary of the "Little Giant" and his subtle arguments for "popular sovereignty." Even before the delegates convened, editors in Nashville and Memphis had condemned the Illinois Senator, and had described him as a "Judas," a "swindler," and a "gambler in politics." What the party's position should be on the question of slavery in the territories, however, proved to be the main bone of contention. Should the inhabitants of a territory be permitted to decide the question of slavery for themselves (i.e., "popular sovereignty"), or should they remain powerless while Congress protected slavery, regardless of how obnoxious slaveholding might be to the inhabitants of the territory? Douglas, as he had indicated in his debates with Lincoln in 1858, wished to satisfy both sides by straddling the issue.\* But Southerners refused to "place a

\* His position was that although Congress could not prohibit slavery, an unfriendly territorial legislature could do so by failure to enact the police legislation necessary for its protection. Without such local protective legislation slavery could not exist. Milton, *Eve of Conflict*, 260, 344.

double construction upon a platform," and insisted upon nothing short of complete protection of slavery in the territories.<sup>9</sup>

On April 27 two reports from the Committee on Platform—a majority and a minority—were presented. The majority report, favored by Southerners, held that neither Congress nor the territorial legislatures could abolish slavery in the territories and that it was the duty of Congress to protect persons and property (slaves) in the territories. The minority report, supported by the Douglas Democrats, denied Congress these responsibilities, claiming that such questions were "judicial in their character." The majority report, acceptable to Tennesseans, was rejected by a small plurality. The free states, in many of which the Democrats stood little chance of winning electoral votes, balloted solidly for the minority report, and thus won its acceptance. Although delegates from the lower South withdrew, Tennesseans remained, no doubt hoping yet to gain some measure of harmony from the chaos. At the insistence of John K. Howard (of Tennessee) the two-thirds rule, whereby two-thirds of the votes would be necessary to gain nomination, was adopted. Thirty-six ballots were taken, with Tennesseans alone casting their votes for Andrew Johnson, but no one could obtain a majority. Then, upon motion by Howard, the Convention adjourned to reassemble in June at Baltimore. The bolters in the meantime had agreed to meet again in June, at Richmond, where they intended to choose a "Southern Democrat."<sup>10</sup>

Union party delegates meanwhile made preparation to attend the Constitutional Union convention in Baltimore, scheduled for May 9. Delegate Gustavus A. Henry met the Tennessee Democratic delegation on his way to the convention. He described the returning leaders as defeated "just like the broken columns of Napoleon's army on their return from the conflict before the walls of Moscow." Accurately did he predict that no discord would mar the convention to which he was going as a delegate.<sup>11</sup>

Neither a platform nor a candidate posed a problem for the Unionists. Sam Houston and John Bell were the leading contenders for the nomination, and Bell won it on the second ballot. The slavery question which was pushed into the background was described as being very insignificant if the preservation of the Union were involved. Neill S. Brown probably expressed the feelings of many when he exclaimed that he "would not swap the Union for all the niggers . . . ." The platform was simple. Delegates pledged their support of "the Constitution of the Country, the Union of the States, and the enforcement of the laws." They further stated that:

As representatives of the Constitutional Union men . . . we hereby pledge ourselves to maintain, protect, and defend . . . those great principles of public liberty and national safety against all enemies, at home and abroad, believing that thereby peace may once more be restored to the country, and the *just rights of the people and of the States reestablished, and the*



*Government again placed in that condition of justice, fraternity, and equality . . . .*

It is doubtful whether Bell's followers expected success, although the editor of the *Daily Patriot* did publish a "funeral notice" of the Democratic party. Most of them no doubt realized that their only chance for success was for the President to be selected by the House of Representatives where the contest would be decided in case no candidate polled a majority of the electoral votes.<sup>12</sup>

Before the two factions of the Democratic party could name candidates, the Republicans confidently assembled (in mid-May) in Chicago. Seward led on the first and second ballots, but delegates, believing that he could not win in a national contest, cast him aside for the more acceptable Illinois railsplitter. They denied Congress or a territorial legislature the right to establish slavery in any of the territories, and described the right of secession as "a treasonous doctrine." No Tennessean took part in the party's deliberations, and no attempt was made to organize the party within the state. Bell's Union party rightly claimed to be the only national organization.<sup>13</sup>

Several weeks later the regular Democrats convened in Baltimore and the Southern bolters made plans to meet at Richmond. None of Tennessee's twenty-four delegates had bolted, and they therefore reassembled with the regulars at Baltimore. Efforts at compromise proved unavailing, however, and Douglas supporters refused to make overtures of any sort to the Southerners. After Virginia's delegates withdrew, those from Tennessee retired "for consultation." Only five decided to remain, and they participated in the nomination of Douglas and the acceptance of his popular sovereignty platform. Once in Richmond, the nineteen Tennesseans were seated, and Andrew Ewing "thanked God that he was now on a floor where he could speak without being hissed . . . or compelled to listen to nauseating speeches." They participated in the nomination of Breckinridge, and in the adoption of a platform which demanded congressional protection of slavery in the territories.<sup>14</sup>

All candidates except Lincoln possessed organized support in Tennessee. Douglas's friends were limited largely to West Tennessee where the *Memphis Appeal* kept his name before the public. Such prominent citizens as William H. Polk, Henry Watterson, and Henry S. Foote actively campaigned for him but they received little encouragement in Middle and East Tennessee. The Little Giant himself met with cool receptions in Nashville and Chattanooga. Weeks before the election it became evident that the real contest was between Bell and Breckinridge.<sup>15</sup>

Breckinridge Democrats were men holding various shades of opinion on the slavery question. Some were secessionists; others were "anti-coercionists"—men who would resist only if Southern institutions were encroached upon by force. Still others believed that the Union could be maintained only through the election of a Southern man on a Southern platform. Men of prominence,

such as Governor Harris, Landon C. Haynes, A.O.P. Nicholson, Gideon J. Pillow, John H. Crozier, and Andrew Johnson, joined in the vigorous campaign. All called for congressional protection of slavery in the territories, and condemned those who wished to "pen up" slavery in the Southern states. Johnson was not as active as the others, but he did appear at a rally in Memphis and urged the Douglas supporters to vote for Breckinridge so that Democratic strength might be concentrated in the effort to defeat Bell. The most dramatic and picturesque of all those who spoke in Tennessee for Breckinridge was William L. Yancey of Alabama. In Knoxville, Nashville, and Memphis, the "orator of secession" captivated his audiences with his attacks upon a party (Republican) which would deny equal protection in the territories. "The Massachusetts man may go there with his clocks," he said, "and the slaveowner with his slaves." A vote for Douglas or Bell, they all agreed, was a vote for Lincoln. The editor of the Fayetteville *Observer* predicted that Douglas would not receive a single electoral vote, and confidently stated that only Breckinridge and Lincoln had a chance for election.<sup>16</sup>

Tennessee Unionists, however, took the position that the rights of all sections were secure only in the party which supported the Union and the Constitution above all else. They disliked the idea of dissolution of the Union, but they were equally opposed to any attempt on the part of the federal government to "coerce" the states. The old Whig leaders, including Brownlow, Oliver P. Temple, Balie Peyton, Neill S. Brown, Gustavus A. Henry and Thomas A. R. Nelson, rallied to Bell's support. Theirs was the only national party, they asserted, and they claimed that a victory for Breckinridge would bring secession. So dramatic were their efforts that some observers recalled the Whig campaigns of the 1840's. Brownlow, after witnessing a two-day rally in Knoxville in which was featured a live raccoon in the branches of an uprooted persimmon tree, admitted that he had not seen anything like it in twenty years.<sup>17</sup>

Frequent discussions of fusion were heard in the closing weeks of the campaign. In mid-September Democrats discussed a combination of Douglas-Breckinridge support in order to defeat the Unionists. Some talked of uniting Bell's forces with both Democratic factions. Nashville's main Breckinridge organ, the *Union and American*, however, warned Democrats to "beware of the seductive wiles" of John Bell. "Like the old man of the mountain," the editor wrote, "let him once mount your shoulders and you cannot shake him off . . . ." Some people believing that none of Lincoln's opponents could win, sought to persuade all three to withdraw in favor of someone who would be "more generally acceptable than either [*sic*] of the three." All attempts at fusion failed, however, and the four candidates stood before the people on election day.<sup>18</sup>

Lincoln, although receiving less than 40 per cent of the popular vote, carried the Northern states where the electoral vote was large, and thus was elected with votes to spare. In Tennessee, where Lincoln received no support, John

Bell defeated Breckinridge by less than five thousand votes. According to a Nashville newspaper the three divisions of the state voted as follows:<sup>19</sup>

	<i>Bell</i>	<i>Breckinridge</i>	<i>Douglas</i>
East Tennessee	22,320	18,904	1,659
Middle Tennessee	29,006	34,452	2,187
West Tennessee	18,384	11,697	7,548

Despite his initial popularity in West Tennessee, Douglas's support was negligible when compared with that of his two opponents. He carried only one county, Tipton, but lacked only eighty-nine votes of defeating Bell in Shelby County. Bell's support was a straight Whig vote, and differed in no important respect from the Whig votes of the preceding twenty years. Breckinridge carried the traditionally Democratic counties in Middle Tennessee, and received a respectable vote in the cotton counties of West Tennessee.<sup>20</sup>

*Secession*—The election of Lincoln—by one section and by a minority vote—inaugurated a secession movement in the states of the deep South. Two days after the election the legislature of South Carolina called a convention, and on December 20 the delegates by unanimous vote enacted an ordinance of secession. Within a few weeks six other states—Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas—joined the Palmetto State, and early in February set up a provisional government in Montgomery.

Tennesseans, like other Southerners, stood overawed and dumbfounded at the success of the sectional candidate. Unlike the people of the cotton states, however, they were not ready to secede. Editors and spokesmen in the three sections of Tennessee deplored the precipitate action of the deep South. A few days before the election the editor of the *Memphis Appeal*, anticipating a secession move if Lincoln were elected, urged Mississippians, Alabamians, Arkansans, and Tennesseans not to secede. He pointed to the profits from the distribution of Northern-made goods, declared that the people of Illinois and Indiana were "as sound on the negro question as the secessionists themselves," and advised that loyalty to the Union would pay dividends in the years to come. The editor of the *Nashville Union and American*, who loyally had supported Breckinridge, condemned South Carolinians for "leaving us [the border states] on a sinking ship."<sup>21</sup>

Many Tennesseans were not averse toward leaving the Union if the Northern majority continued to violate the South's constitutional rights, but they believed that the matter first should be discussed thoroughly in a "General Convention of the Slave States," after which joint action might be taken instead of precipitate piecemeal secession. Soon after Lincoln's election prominent members of both the Democratic and Constitutional Union parties issued a joint





(Courtesy Springfield Chamber of Commerce)

*Springfield—Main Street*

statement to local politicians throughout the state. They urged local leaders to request the Governor to call an extra session of the legislature, which, once assembled, would be implored to aid in bringing "about a convention of the Southern states." In such an assembly "existing political troubles" would be considered, and an attempt made "to compose our sectional strife." Shortly thereafter Governor Harris called the legislature to convene in extra session on January 7, 1861. He said nothing about a Southern convention, but claimed that the state's financial and political crises needed legislative consideration.<sup>22</sup>

The legislators assembled as requested and heard Governor Harris deliver a message strongly pro-Southern in tone. The slaveholding states had suffered many grievances, he said, the results of the "systematic, wanton, and long continued agitation of the slavery question." Now, he pointed out, the presidency was in the hands of a sectional party which had sworn undying enmity to slavery and the South. Although he had no doubt as to the necessity and propriety of calling a state convention "at the earliest day practicable to take into consideration our federal relations, and determine what action should be taken by the State of Tennessee for the security and peace of her citizens," he proposed to the lawmakers that they submit the question to the people.<sup>23</sup>

The legislators complied with the governor's request, and set February 9 as the date for the referendum. The people were to vote for "Convention" or for "No Convention." The law also provided that delegates for the meeting should be selected at the same time in order that a second poll might not be necessary if the convention were authorized.<sup>24</sup>

In the meantime various political leaders discussed compromises and ways of averting civil war. In the Senate Andrew Johnson proposed a constitutional amendment calling for sectional alternation of the presidency and membership on the Supreme Court, and a permanent division of the territories into free and slave portions. A.O.P. Nicholson, also in the Senate, deplored separation and asked for a "peaceful" settlement of the question. Governor Harris, in a message to the legislature, proposed as a workable solution the establishment of a line dividing the territories between North and South. He also suggested that if authorities in any Northern state refused to return a fugitive slave to his rightful owner they should be required to pay double the value of the slave. Slaveowners should be guaranteed protection of their slave property while passing through or temporarily residing in any state, he claimed, and slavery should never be abolished in the District of Columbia or any other area in the slave states over which the United States had jurisdiction.<sup>25</sup>

The only compromise proposal which was considered seriously by Congressional leaders was Senator John Crittenden's measure, which was similar to Harris's proposals. According to the Kentucky Senator, slavery should be permitted south of latitude 36° 30', slavery should not be abolished in the District of Columbia without compensation and the consent of the inhabitants of Virginia and Maryland, and compensation should be granted by the federal government for fugitive slaves not recovered. Little interest in compromise could be aroused among Republican leaders, however, and the congressional attempts at compromise failed.

Tennessee sent delegates to the Washington Peace Conference held in the nation's capital on February 4. The meeting, called at the request of the Virginia legislature and presided over by former President John Tyler, was attended by delegates from twenty-one states. Eleven of Tennessee's twelve delegates stood staunchly for moderation, but their attempts at compromise, like the others, also resulted in failure.<sup>26</sup>

Preparatory to the February referendum in Tennessee, secessionists and Unionists strived actively to win victory at the polls. Union meetings were held throughout the state, and Gustavus A. Henry, Brownlow, and others urged the people not to act precipitately, but to wait longer and give the Republicans "a fair trial." Prominent Democrats, however, including the editors of the Memphis *Avalanche* and the Nashville *Union and American*, urged the people to approve the holding of a convention, and to elect "states rights, anticoercion men."<sup>27</sup>

On election day the people rejected the convention by a substantial vote.\* The total vote of the Union candidates was nearly four times that amassed by the disunion candidates. A careful examination of the vote reveals little correlation between the contest and that of the presidential election of 1860, thus indicating that party lines had broken down. Further, the vote shows that the people of West Tennessee favored the convention, those of the eastern section opposed it, while people in Middle Tennessee were almost equally divided. In the contests for delegates, however, people in all sections gave solid majorities to the Union candidates.<sup>28</sup>

The election did not end the controversy. The Unionists of East Tennessee hailed the vote as a great victory, and many believed that the state was destined to remain permanently within the Union. Although the danger of precipitate action had been removed, secessionists did not despair. They excoriated Bell and other Unionists, claimed that the victory had given Lincoln new determination to "wage an irrepressible conflict," and resolved to continue their agitation. Governor Harris, considered the leader of the pro-Southern forces in the state, was reminded by a correspondent that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."<sup>29</sup>

The people of Franklin County (in the south central part of the state), were among those most dissatisfied with the results of the referendum. Although pro-Union delegates had received nearly a four-to-one majority in the state as a whole, the one in Franklin County had polled only 240 votes as compared with Peter Turney's 1,240 votes. A son of Hopkins L. Turney, Peter, a young lawyer, was considered one of the state's most active secessionists.<sup>30</sup> Immediately after the February referendum, Franklin leaders called a mass meeting to determine what course their county could pursue. Turney delivered a "very able and forcible speech in favor of immediate secession," and offered a series of resolutions in which he stated that the citizens of Franklin were forced "against . . . their wills and earnest desires" to remain a part of the United States, when their "hearts, sympathies, and feelings are with the Confederate States of America." Preferring Confederate Alabama to Unionist Tennessee, Turney demanded that the legislatures of the two states be petitioned, "to change the line between the States, so as to transfer the county of Franklin to the State of Alabama, unless, before this can be done, Tennessee secedes from the Union, thereby giving to us a government having our consent." Subject to the ratification of the two states, Turney resolved that "we declare ourselves out of the Union." After the young lawyer finished, H. T. Carr delivered a speech equally inflammatory in nature. He described Congress, as presently constituted, as being one which would

\* East Tennesseans voted 33,299 to 7,767 against calling a convention. Middle Tennessee voters rejected the move by a vote of 28,224 to 26,842, while those in the western division favored a convention by a vote of 22,623 to 7,834. Official Returns in *Union and American*, March 3, 1861.



destroy commerce, ruin trade, depreciate currency, invade sovereign States, burn cities, butcher armies, gibbet patriots, hang veterans, oppress freemen, blot . . . liberty, beggar homes, widow mothers, orphan children, and desolate the peace and happiness of the nation with fire and sword.<sup>31</sup>

Before the Tennessee and Alabama legislatures could act on the resolutions the unfortunate Fort Sumter episode (to be discussed presently) occurred and Tennesseans began to make plans for secession. Even before Sumter, however, a Confederate flag was raised "on a pole 100 feet high" in Winchester, the county seat of Franklin County. Within a two weeks' period the people of Franklin proceeded with haste to raise and outfit an army. On May 1, twelve hundred volunteers assembled on the campus of Mary Sharpe College in Winchester. They marched two miles to Decherd—"their path was literally strewn with flowers from the hands of ladies and children," while "girls sobbed quietly"—and there they entrained for Montgomery to join "Jeff Davis and the Southern Confederacy."<sup>32</sup>

The vast majority of Tennesseans, however, deplored such hasty action and waited to determine what Lincoln would do. In his inaugural address the new President adopted a conciliatory tone but made clear that he considered secession illegal and would enforce the laws in "all the states." People saw in the address whatever they wished to see, depending upon whether they were secessionists or Unionists. The Democratic *Union and American* called it "a declaration of war against the seceded states," and prophesied that "in less than thirty days . . . we shall have the clangor of resounding arms, with all its concomitants of death, carnage, and woe." The Unionist *Republican Banner*, however, considered the address "mild and conservative" and believed that Lincoln had dispelled the fear of "coercion." If war came, the editor wrote, it would not be the responsibility of the President.<sup>33</sup>

A problem of immediate concern to Lincoln was what to do about Fort Sumter, a United States fort and arsenal lying within the borders of South Carolina. The fort was a symbol of federal authority in the state, and it lay at the mercy of the Confederates. President Buchanan had tried in January to send provisions to the small force of eighty-four men, but when the ship bearing supplies entered the harbor it was fired upon by the South Carolina artillery. Although Lincoln had been warned by Confederate authorities that any attempt to send in fresh provisions would precipitate war, in April he gave formal orders for an expedition to proceed. When Confederate authorities became aware of the move, they called on Major Robert Anderson, the officer in charge of the fort, to surrender immediately. His refusal to do so brought the fire of the Confederate batteries, and on April 13 Anderson surrendered. The war thus had begun, and two days later President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 volunteers.

Governor Harris answered Lincoln's request for troops with characteristic vigor. "Tennessee will not furnish a single man for purposes of coercion," he

telegraphed, "but 50,000 if necessary for the defense of our rights and those of our Southern brothers." Announcing that "in such an unholy crusade no gallant son of Tennessee will ever draw his sword," he issued a call for a second extra session of the legislature to convene in Nashville on April 25.<sup>34</sup>

As legislators began to arrive for the extra session they found sentiment in Nashville to be considerably different from what it had been only a few weeks earlier. In no other section of the state had the people changed so rapidly from Unionists to secessionists. Major Campbell Brown of Spring Hill (Maury County), for example, was amazed at the transformation. Brown had returned to Nashville in March after a long stay in England. In the state's capital he found "the union feeling . . . very strong"; so strong, indeed, that he "had a sufficiently disagreeable time in defending . . . [his] opinion." He was bitter because of "the villainous" way in which "the abolition journals and speakers of the North misrepresented . . . [the South] abroad." Immediately after the fall of Fort Sumter, however, he returned to Nashville from Spring Hill. To his "perfect surprise" he "found secession . . . at every corner." Confederate flags and secession parades were constantly in the streets and everybody was "ripe for joining the Confederacy."<sup>35</sup>

The legislators found Governor Harris in no mood for compromise. He blamed the President for having "wantonly inaugurated an internecine war upon the people of the slave and nonslaveholding states," and he described the "real" Union (as "established by our fathers") as no longer existent. He recommended the immediate enactment of a measure declaring that Tennessee had resumed her sovereignty, after which she should declare her independence from the United States and unite with the Confederate states. Accordingly, the lawmakers on May 6 drafted "A Declaration of Independence . . . Dissolving the Federal Relations between the State of Tennessee and the United States," and stipulated that it should be submitted to the people for ratification or rejection on June 8.<sup>36</sup>

As the time for the referendum approached prominent leaders of church, state, and press in Middle and West Tennessee urged ratification of the declaration of independence, while those of East Tennessee demanded that it be rejected.\* The Reverend James H. Otey and the Reverend Leonidas Polk, Episco-

\* This was the occasion for a temporary reconciliation between Johnson and Brownlow. The latter had denounced Johnson as a "bastard" and an "atheist" on many occasions, but now they joined T.A.R. Nelson in a tour of East Tennessee to persuade the people against secession. In many of the towns they were well received, but Johnson became a special target for secessionists. At Kingsport and Jonesboro the future President was treated roughly, and at several towns he was called a hireling of Lincoln and a "G— D—d Traitor." Frequent threats were made against his life. When he and Nelson were in Kingston, Brownlow, then in Knoxville, became so fearful for Johnson's life that he sent his son to spirit the Senator away safely. Although the Brownlow boy found Johnson on

pal bishops, declared strongly in favor of secession, and Bishop Polk soon cast aside his clerical robes to don the armor of Mars. Neill S. Brown, Cave Johnson, Return J. Meigs, E. H. Ewing, John Bell, and Balie Peyton, all erstwhile prominent Unionists, issued a joint statement urging that coercion of the Southern states should be resisted. The editors of the five Nashville newspapers, who often had been bitter rivals and had advocated diverse policies, joined forces to urge that the "noble state" of Tennessee be declared "independent forever of the United States Government." The editor of the Nashville *Republican Banner*, who vehemently opposed secession earlier, now urged the people to vote for "the best interests of the state," and declared that "the rapidly developing policy [of the North] of . . . subjugation of the South . . . must serve to convince every patriotic and fair-minded man . . . that all hopes of a reconstruction of the Union" have been abandoned. One week later the editor, angered by Northern "war journals," addressed his readers:

*People of Tennessee!* If you could sit here in our offices and read all the journals of the North as we do, there would be little Northern sentiment left.

On voting day the editor had nothing but contempt for people who wanted a "union with a people . . . dead to all moral and constitutional obligations."<sup>37</sup>

Although Brownlow and Thomas A. R. Nelson branded the referendum "unconstitutional," Tennesseans voted by a substantial majority in favor of "Separation" from the Union and "Representation" in the Confederacy. Only in East Tennessee did strong Unionist sentiment prevail. People in both the middle and western divisions voted overwhelmingly for secession, indicating that there were many defections from Unionist ranks. The vote was as follows:<sup>38</sup>

	<i>For Separation</i>	<i>Against Separation</i>
East Tennessee	14,780	32,923
Middle Tennessee	58,265	8,198
West Tennessee	29,127	6,117
Military camps	2,741	0

A careful analysis of the returns shows that the people of the old Whig district in East Tennessee, with Knoxville at the center, strongly opposed separation just as they had voted against holding a convention four months earlier. Democratic Sullivan and Meigs counties, which had voted for a convention, were now for separation; they were joined by four other East Tennessee counties—Sequatchie, Rhea, Polk, and Monroe. Many reasons have been assigned for

the speaker's platform reeling from whiskey punch, he was able to persuade him to leave quietly after Johnson in a loud voice had damned the "traitors of the cotton states." Alexander, *T.A.R. Nelson*, 75-79; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 53-54.



the decision of East Tennesseans to remain loyal to the Union while people in the central and western divisions voted six-to-one to secede. First, it must be borne in mind that complete unity never had characterized the grand divisions of the state. The political cleavage between the sections, which persists to this day, became evident as early as the 1820's. After 1836 East Tennesseans not infrequently voted differently from people in the rest of the state, and for the next three decades the old-line Whigs hated Democrats with a passion. Brownlow, for example, claimed that he had never known an honest Democrat, and O. P. Temple thought the party to be "antichrist." As June 8 approached and the Democratic support of secession became evident, it was only natural for at least some of the old-line Whigs in the Knoxville area to continue their opposition. A second reason for the June vote was that the people of East Tennessee were not as well informed as were people in the other two sections. They were slow to grasp the secession sentiment which came to them from West and Middle Tennessee, although the anti-Republican movement was picking up momentum there by June 8. In the meantime they had been harangued, cajoled, and persuaded by aggressive Unionist leaders that they might avoid bloody conflict if they (as Spokesman S. R. Rodgers advised) held "plum still." A third reason was that they were poor. The rocky soil produced little, and they amassed few worldly possessions. They feared that secession would bring an increase in taxes and that the Confederate government would be one of "rich men." Poor and without slaves, they consoled themselves in the thought that they were hard workers and morally better than the people who had more property than they. They abhorred the individual Negro—Andrew Johnson prophesied that "blood, rape and rapine will be our portion" if the Negro were liberated, and Brownlow abhorred "Negroes and Whites mingling"—but believed that the race as a whole was mistreated.<sup>39</sup>

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The most striking change came from the mountain counties of Middle Tennessee. The people of Cannon, DeKalb, Smith, Jackson, Overton, White, and Van Buren, who had opposed a convention in February, now wanted separation. Other counties of the central division which had voted against a convention in February and indicated a preference for separation in the June contest, were Bedford, Coffee, Rutherford, Wilson, and Williamson. Middle and West Tennesseans voted solidly for secession except for those in a strip of territory running north and south at the junction of the two sections composed of the counties of Weakley, Carroll, Henderson, Decatur, Hardin, and Wayne. Whigs and Democrats were about equally divided in these counties, except for Carroll and Henderson where Whigs had a two-to-one advantage. According to one historian, these people, generally poor in material resources, may have been motivated by economic reasons to take a position contrary to that assumed by the well-to-do Whigs in the surrounding counties. Macon, a Whig county of poor soil in north central Tennessee, also voted against separation.<sup>40</sup>



(Courtesy Columbia-Mt. Pleasant Chamber of Commerce)

*Columbia—Maury County Court House*

Even before the referendum was held, Harris made preparations to join the Confederacy. As authorized by the legislature, he entered on May 7 into a military league with the Confederate States, gave them permission to erect a battery at Memphis as a part of the Mississippi River fortifications, and encouraged volunteers to join the Southern forces. On May 24 he wrote Major General Gideon J. Pillow that he was "making every possible effort to organize and procure such military force as may be necessary to protect the state from invasion." On the following day he ordered from a New Orleans firm "at any reasonable price," a "ten thousand stand of arms," with the "Endfield [*sic*] sabel rifle bayonett [*sic*] or rifle musket" preferred.<sup>41</sup>

Immediately after the Tennessee vote United States Senator A. O. P. Nicholson resigned and wrote Harris that he would "acquiesce cheerfully" in the result of the referendum. As he saw it, the people had declared their independence of the United States government and he no longer had a right to a place in its Senate. He had not been a rabid secessionist—when South Carolina seceded

he stated in Congress that he could not recognize the "*de jure*" secession of the state, although he did admit the "*de facto*" separation from the Union—but now he followed his state. Andrew Johnson, however, decided to retain his seat in the federal Senate.<sup>24</sup>

John Bell, one of the state's outstanding Unionists until soon after Sumter, despaired of any concessions from the Lincoln administration and joined the ranks of the secessionists. A change of heart so pronounced by so able a leader deserves more than passing consideration. Soon after the Republican victory in November, 1860, Bell openly expressed confidence in the President-elect and believed that Lincoln was sincere and courageous.\* He was confident that only one-third of the Republicans could be considered "dangerous," and that the rest had no desire to make war on Southern interests. Preparatory to the referendum of February 9, Bell made speeches in which he expressed confidence in the new administration, interpreted Lincoln's policy as one of conciliation, and criticized Harris for his strong stand on the matter of secession.<sup>43</sup>

Bell hurried to Washington to be present for Lincoln's inauguration. As the recognized leader of the Tennessee Unionists, he was the logical person to dispense the patronage in the state and had been mentioned prominently for a seat in Lincoln's cabinet. While in Washington he conferred with Lincoln and urged him to exercise care so that "no opportunity for a collision between the troops of the seceding States and those of the Government" might take place. Bell insisted that the bayonet could accomplish nothing of lasting value, and he suggested that if the seceding states rejected conciliation, "the wisest course would be to let them go in peace." The able Tennessean left Washington confident that the policy of the new administration would be one of conciliation.<sup>44</sup>

Various historians have disputed the influence of Bell, and some have expressed the belief that had he remained faithful to his Unionist convictions, Tennessee might not have seceded.\*\* Although Bell was powerful, such is to

\* Should Lincoln prove false, Bell suggested that "we . . . form a Central Confederacy which will ultimately be joined by the cotton states." Bell had ample reason, however, to believe that the President would not use force. In early January, Lincoln had sent Bell a message by Captain Parmenas Taylor Turnley, an East Tennessean recently stationed in Illinois but now en route to his home, in which he stated that he did not "believe the present outward excitement in the South is so deep or widespread as many believe." He was reasonably sure that "quiet will ensue after the 4th of March." Parks, "John Bell and Secession," 40; David Rankin Barbee, "The Line of Blood: Lincoln and the Coming of the Civil War," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (March, 1957), 8.

\*\* Blame for Tennessee's secession also has been placed upon Governor Harris. "Tennessee never seceded; Isham G. Harris seceded and carried Tennessee along with him," so some have written. The Governor, however, did not commit himself to secession until after Lincoln's election and he, like the vast majority of other Tennesseans, preferred to remain with the Union until the cause for peace seemed hopeless. Once the tide turned after Fort Sumter, neither Harris nor any other



attribute to him a degree of influence which probably no one in the state possessed. An important factor in Bell's change of heart was Lincoln's exhibition of political ineptitude in the selection of Andrew Johnson—who had been in the Breckinridge camp in November, 1860, and had been a lifelong Democrat—as the chief patronage dispenser in the state instead of Bell or some other Unionist. Apparently Bell was in agreement with Brownlow and was ready to carry to its logical conclusion the sentiment expressed by the Knoxville editor, who wrote that he had little desire to remain in the Union if Johnson and Emerson Etheridge were permitted "to monopolize the power and patronage of the Union party in Tennessee." Brownlow believed that such action on Lincoln's part merited "the scorn and condemnation of every honest man in the Union ranks." Bell and his Unionist friends in Tennessee had labored long and faithfully in their devotion to the letter and spirit of the American Constitution; at last they became convinced that not only did Lincoln and the Republicans have little veneration for constitutional principles but they connived with Johnson to build an allied political group in Tennessee from the elements that had proven in the past to be the least devoted to the defense of the Constitution.<sup>45</sup>

On April 18, 1861, Bell and ten other Tennessee conservatives issued a statement in which they commended Harris and condemned Lincoln.\* Thenceforth John Bell of Tennessee was in the ranks of the secessionists. He remained in Nashville until the approach of the Union forces and then joined his children in Rutherford County. Later, during the war he lived in both Alabama and Georgia but returned to Tennessee in 1865.<sup>46</sup>

The second half of the year, 1861, was a period of hasty preparation for war. Harris appointed Gideon J. Pillow as commander of the Tennessee forces, with three subordinates in charge of each of the grand divisions of the state. The East Tennessee Unionists presented Harris with a major problem. They had voted two-to-one against secession, and now entertained strong sentiments in favor of establishing an independent state. Meetings of an "East Tennessee Convention" were held in Greeneville, Knoxville, and Kingston, where plans were made for separation from Tennessee.\*\* Harris wrote General Pillow on

single individual, regardless of his position, could be held accountable for the developments. See Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 47; Capers, *River Town*, 142; Peter F. Walker, "Building a Tennessee Army: Autumn, 1861," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (June, 1957), 101.

\* Brownlow was not among the ten. Earlier, he had seriously considered casting his lot with the Confederacy, but East Tennessee associates persuaded him to remain on his original course. Coulter, *Brownlow*, 152.

\*\* A committee of three, John Netherland, Oliver P. Temple, and James P. McDowell, prepared and presented a memorial to the legislature on June 20 asking that the counties of East Tennessee and "such counties in Middle Tennessee as desire to co-operate with them" be permitted to form a separate state. It was referred to a committee, but no action was taken on it. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 24-25; *Senate Journal*, 2 extra sess., 1861, pp. 176-77.

June 20 that "Many . . . [East Tennesseans] are bent on rebellion [against the state] and desperate resistance to any attempt which may be made to put it down . . . . I can't tell at what moment there will be an onslaught of Union men upon the southern rights men. . . ." The situation, the Governor concluded, required that a considerable force should be dispatched to the scene at once. Two weeks later Landon C. Haynes advised that it would take six regiments to keep East Tennessee in line, since "moral power" could "no longer be relied on to crush the rebellion [against Tennessee]." <sup>47</sup>

On July 2, Governor Harris tendered to the Confederate President the provisional army of Tennessee. The forces consisted of twenty-two regiments of infantry, two regiments of cavalry, ten companies of artillery, an engineering corps and an ordnance bureau. The infantry, Harris wrote, was "fully armed and equipped ready for the field," and the cavalry was armed with sabers and double-barrelled shotguns. All cavalymen were mounted. The tender was made with the "hope" that the Confederate states would "at all times" defend Tennessee's soil from invasion.\* Davis of course accepted the troops, and on July 4 replaced Pillow with General Leonidas Polk, a West Point graduate. <sup>48</sup>

Harris gave little attention to the matter of reelection, but it was a foregone conclusion that the "Southern Rights Party," as the secessionists now called themselves, would nominate him in their convention in May. All principal newspapers, except the Nashville *Republican Banner* and Brownlow's Knoxville *Whig*, waged a strenuous campaign for the Governor. Harris was described as one who was "on the battle front against the enemy," and the editor of the Memphis *Appeal* wrote that all who dared to vote against him were guilty of treason. In March, Brownlow had announced that he would oppose Harris, but soon withdrew in favor of William H. Polk after even East Tennesseans received the fiery editor's announcement with little enthusiasm. In his brief campaign, however, Brownlow had endorsed Lincoln's inaugural address, denounced perpetrators of disunion, claimed that his eyes had not been blinded by gazing "through telescopes made of cotton stalks," and compared secessionists to "Lucifer." Polk, a brother of the deceased James Knox Polk, agreed to launch what must have appeared to all to have been a hopeless race. <sup>49</sup>

The contest was subordinated to the military developments. Polk accused Harris of trying to become a military dictator, blamed him for the state's secession, charged that he had exceeded his rights under the constitution, and predicted that he would go to the Confederate Senate rather than serve out his term as governor even if he were reelected. Polk's supporters claimed that their candidate was acceptable to East Tennesseans, while the reelection of Harris would drive them out of the state. The Governor's military activities made

\* Tennessee was not officially accepted by the Confederate Congress until July 22, 1861. *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States* (8 vols., Washington, 1904), I, 272.



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Knoxville City Hall, Built in 1848 as School for the Deaf*

him extremely popular with the masses, however, and he was elected by an overwhelming majority, receiving nearly twice as many votes as his opponent. He carried the middle and western divisions by substantial majorities, but Polk won East Tennessee by over 12,500 votes.\* Harris accepted his election as a mandate from the people to continue his vigorous war efforts, but his repudiation in the eastern sector boded ill for the future.<sup>50</sup>

The secessionists also secured large majorities in both house and senate. Convening in October, 1861, the legislators redistricted the state into eleven Confederate congressional divisions. They chose Landon C. Haynes and Gustavus A. Henry as Confederate Senators; the former was an old Breckinridge fire-eater and the latter an old Bell Whig. Although bitter enemies in the past, they now pledged "their whole souls, energies, and talents to the cause of Southern rights." Legislators met from October to December, before adjourning for Christmas,

\* The vote was as follows: Harris, 75,300; Polk, 43,495. *Union and American*, October 31, 1861.



and enjoyed their last undisturbed session. When they resumed deliberations in January the Federal military command was making plans to take Forts Henry and Donelson, and the legislators fled to Memphis.<sup>51</sup>

The loyalist element in the first four districts (East Tennessee) also selected Congressmen, and three of them actually were seated. The fourth, Thomas A. R. Nelson, however, was captured by Confederate authorities while seeking to pass through Virginia. After a brief imprisonment he was returned to his home after he took the oath of allegiance to the Confederate government.<sup>52</sup>

Whether Tennesseans were justified in their revolt against the federal government and Republican control always will remain an academic question. The intransigent opposition of the Republicans and of President-elect Lincoln to all efforts at compromise, the precipitant secession and abandonment by the deep South of a defense of the Constitution within the Union, Lincoln's decision to "coerce" the seceded states, and the strong secession leanings of Governor Harris, all were decisive factors in Tennessee's secession. Many Democrats were sympathetic toward the cotton states even before 1860, and the events of 1860-1861 intensified their ultraist leanings. The Conservatives, deeply devoted to the Union, labored long and faithfully to preserve it under the Constitution, even though it was temporarily in the hands of a hostile section. Had they remained faithful after Sumter to their original principles they might have prevented secession, but such is extremely doubtful. It is evident that at length they became convinced that not only did Republicans have little veneration for constitutional principles, but that party leaders were engaged in building an allied political group in Tennessee (with Andrew Johnson at the head) from elements which in the past had proved to be the least devoted to the defense of the Union. Once having become convinced that they had little to fear and perhaps more to gain from an alliance with the Confederate States, they gave up their struggle for the Union. The Confederate government, incidentally, did not make the mistake which Lincoln made; the Confederate patronage in Tennessee was distributed partly through the old Union leaders. Historians who have blamed Bell and other Conservatives for the state's secession probably have overstated their case, but it remains true that the Conservatives' desertion of the Union cause was an important factor in the disunion victory of June, 1861. The minds of the Middle and West Tennessee slaveholders were made up, however, and it is highly speculative whether Bell or anyone else could have dissuaded them.<sup>53</sup>

The vast majority of Tennesseans were Unionists until the fateful April Days. The fall of Fort Sumter and Lincoln's call for troops convinced them that a search for a peaceful solution was futile, that they could not stand "plum still," and that, being a border state where much of the fighting was sure to take place, they would have to join one side or the other. Perhaps many people, at least in Middle and West Tennessee, must have shared the sentiments of a West Tennessee farmer named B. W. Binkley, who wrote during the war:

"I was for the Union so long as there was any hope of our remaining in it with peace and honor. When Lincoln issued his proclamation calling for 75,000 troops to whip . . . the Seceded States, I was satisfied that day had passed, and now—though not what you'd term a regular Secessionist—I am the most uncompromising *rebel* you ever knew."<sup>54</sup>

## CHAPTER XXVI—NOTES

1. Hesselstine (ed.), *Ramsey: Autobiography and Letters*, 94.
2. Nashville *Union and American* quoted in Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, "The Presidential Campaign of 1860 in Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 3 (1931), 5.
3. Nashville *Patriot*, October 20, 1859; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 174, 179 (note); Dwight Dumond, *The Secession Movement, 1860-1861* (New York, 1931), 115; Robert Love Partin, "The Secession Movement in Tennessee" (Ph.D. thesis, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1935), 16, 32-33; *Public Acts*, 1859-1860, Resolution No. 5, pp. 653-56.
4. *Patriot*, October 20, 22, 1859; *Union and American*, October 21, 22, December 2, 1859; *Congressional Globe*, 36 Cong., 1 sess., 1859-1860, pp. 100-07, 623-28; *Public Acts*, 1859-1860, Resolution No. 5, pp. 653-56; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 5; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 181.
5. *Appendix to Senate and House Journals*, 1859-1860, p. 132.
6. *Union and American*, January 19, 1860; Partin, "Secession Movement," 45. For a detailed discussion of the election of 1860, see Craven, *Southern Nationalism*, Chap. 12.
7. Nashville *Republican Banner*, February 23, 26, 1860; Parks, *John Bell*, 348.
8. *Ibid.*, 344-49; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 8-9.
9. *Union and American*, February 3, 1860; Memphis *Avalanche* quoted in *Republican Banner*, April 1, 1860; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 9-10; Milton, *Eve of Conflict*, 260, 344; Dumond, *Secession Movement*, Chapters 3-4.
10. *Ibid.*, 44-45, 50; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 10-11.
11. *Ibid.*, 11.
12. *Patriot*, May 11, 16, 17, 18, 1860; *Republican Banner*, May 12, 15, 16, 17, 1860; Dumond, *Secession Movement*, 93-94; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 12; Parks, *John Bell*, 351 ff.; "John Bell and Secession," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 35.
13. Dumond, *Secession Movement*, 69; *Patriot*, May 16, 1860.
14. Quoted in M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 14.
15. *Patriot*, November 7, 1860; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 201.
16. Parks, *John Bell*, 383-84; M. Hamer, "Campaign of 1860," 15-17; Fayetteville *Observer*, September 6, 31, 1860.
17. *Ibid.*, 20; Knoxville *Whig*, September 29, 1860; Parks, *John Bell*, 382.
18. *Union and American*, July 26, 1860; Parks, *John Bell*, 375. Attempts at fusion and their ultimate failure are discussed in detail in *ibid.*, Chapter 18.
19. *Patriot*, November 26, 1860; Ollinger Crenshaw, "The Slave States in the Presidential Election of 1860" (Johns Hopkins University *Studies*, Ser. LXIII, No. 3), 185; Craven, *Southern Nationalism*, 346-47.
20. *Republican Banner*, December 4, 1860; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 336.

21. Quoted in Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 213.
22. *Union and American*, November 25, 1860; Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 337; Patton, *Unionist and Reconstruction*, 10; Campbell, "Tennessee and Union" (article), 82; "The Significance of the Unionist Victory in the Election of February 9, 1861 in Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 14 (1942), 12-13; Craven, *Coming of Civil War*, 426; *Memphis Appeal*, October 24, 1860.
23. *Public Acts*, 1861, 1 extra sess., 1-13.
24. *Senate Journal*, 1861, 1, extra sess., 59.
25. *Public Acts*, 1861, 1 extra sess., 8; *Cong. Globe*, 1860-1861, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 82-83, 188.
26. *Public Acts*, 1861, 1 extra sess., Joint Resolutions 13 and 18; Campbell, "Unionist Victory," 18; Robert G. Gunderson, "The Washington Peace Conference of 1861: Selection of Delegates," *Journal of Southern History*, XXIV (August, 1958), 358.
27. Rothrock (ed.), *The French Broad-Holston Country*, 127-28; *Memphis Avalanche*, February 4, 5, 7, 1861; *Union and American*, February 5, 9, 1861; Craven, *Southern Nationalism*, 386; Dumond, *Secession Movement*, 239 ff.
28. Official returns in *Union and American*, March 3, 1861; Campbell, "Unionist Victory," 27.
29. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 13.
30. Howard Hall, "Franklin County in the Secession Crisis," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (March, 1958), 37-39; *Patriot*, March 7, 1861; Craven, *Southern Nationalism*, 386.
31. Hall, "Franklin County," 39; Secession leaflet in possession of Miss Sarah Moore, Assistant Librarian, Middle Tennessee State College, Murfreesboro.
32. Hall, "Franklin County," 37, 42-43; *Nashville Gazette*, May 3, 1861; O. P. Temple, *East Tennessee and the Civil War* (Cincinnati, 1899), 224-25.
33. *Union and American*, March 5, 1861; *Republican Banner*, March 6, 1861.
34. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 14, 17. The original draft of Harris's message is reproduced in White, *Tennessee, Its Growth and Progress*, 587.
35. Verton M. Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment and the Secession Movement, November, 1860-June, 1861," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 20 (1948), 62; Major Campbell Brown, *Military Reminiscences from 1861-1865*, Manuscript No. 4, in State Library, Nashville.
36. *Public Acts*, 1861, 2 extra sess., 9, 13, 14 (misnumbered 12); *Senate Journal*, 1861, 2 extra sess., 32; *House Journal*, 1861, 2 extra sess., 57. The vote in the senate was 20 to 4, and in the house, 46 to 21.
37. Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment," 62; *Republican Banner*, April 28, May 10, 11, 17, June 8, 1861; James E. Walmsley, "The Change of Secession Sentiment in Virginia in 1861," *American Historical Review*, XXXI (October, 1925), Otey to Edward C. Burks, 100.
38. *Union and American*, June 16, 1861; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 149.
39. *Ibid.*, 114; Folmsbee, *Sectionalism*, 54; Queener, "East Tennessee Sentiment," 63, 65-67, 68-69, 70-71, 78-79; Thomas W. Humes, *The Loyal Mountaineers of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1888), 107.
40. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 338-44.
41. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (129 vols. and index, Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. IV, Vol. I, 275 (hereinafter cited as O.R.); Isham Green Harris, "Letter Book," microfilm at State Library; Stanley F. Horn, *The Army of Tennessee* (Indianapolis, 1941), 48; Hall, "Franklin County," 37.



42. Nicholson to Harris, in "Some Tennessee Letters, 1849-1864," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IV (September, 1945), 253-54; *Congressional Globe*, 1860-1861, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 188.
43. Parks, "John Bell and Secession," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 16 (1944), 37-40; *John Bell*, 394; *Union and American*, January 23, 24, 1861.
44. *Patriot*, March 12, 1861; *Avalanche*, January 30, 1861; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 247; Parks, "John Bell and Secession," 40-41.
45. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 17; James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years in Congress* (2 vols., Norwich, 1884), I, 310-11; Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict* (2 vols., Hartford, 1864), I, 482; Henry, "Tennessee Conservatives," 258n, 276. See also Joshua Caldwell, "John Bell of Tennessee," *American Historical Review*, IV (July, 1899), 662-64.
46. Parks, "John Bell and Secession," 42ff.
47. Harris, "Letter Book"; Campbell, "Tennessee and Union" (article), 89; *Senate Journal*, 1861, 3 extra sess., 70, 142-44, 176-78; Parks, "John Bell and Secession," 47; Alexander, *T. A. R. Nelson*, 84-89.
48. Harris, Letter Book; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 48.
49. Partin, "Secession Movement," 291; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 149-51; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 24-25; *Appeal*, cited in *Republican Banner*, July 20, 1861.
50. *Union and American*, October 31, 1861; Partin, "Secession Movement," 297; *Republican Banner*, July 2, 3, 1861.
51. *Public Acts*, 2 sess., 1861-1862, Chap. XII, 8-9; *Union and American*, October 27, 1861; "Tennesseans in the Confederate Congresses," *Confederate Veteran*, XXXV (1927), 424-25, 438; James W. Bellamy, "The Political Career of Landon Carter Haynes," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 28 (1956), 102, 118ff.; Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (New York, 1956), 122.
52. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 28-29; Alexander, *T. A. R. Nelson*, 87-93.
53. Parks, *John Bell*, 404. The authors are indebted to Professor J. Milton Henry, of Austin Peay State College, for access to his excellent paper, "The Revolution in Tennessee, February, 1861 to June, 1861," which he read at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association in 1957. Much of the material in the last paragraph above is based upon his conclusions. The paper recently has been published, under the same title and substantially as the authors originally examined it, in *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (June, 1959), 99-119.
54. Quoted in Campbell, "Tennessee and Union" (dissertation), 265.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### *The Civil War: Military Events\**

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THE CONFEDERATE STATES embarked upon a war for independence with many disadvantages. They were faced by an enemy which had nearly a four-to-one advantage in population, a standing army and navy, a preponderance of industry, and a superior transportation system. By no means least of all was their problem of defense, made difficult by the natural barriers which impeded effective communication. The Blue Ridge Mountains split the South into East and West, and the latter was divided further by the Mississippi River. The Tennessee and Cumberland rivers were highways into Tennessee and the Confederacy.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, General Leonidas Polk was assigned command in the West on July 4, 1861; he arrived in Memphis several days later and took up his tasks with characteristic vigor. General Gideon J. Pillow had already begun the fortification of Memphis and Island Number 10 (located a few miles west of the extreme northwest corner of the state), and had undertaken an ambitious work seventy-five miles north of Memphis later called Fort Pillow. Polk continued Pillow's work. He also gave attention to the pressing problems in East Tennessee. Upon his recommendations Felix Zollicoffer was commissioned brigadier general and dispatched to Knoxville with a motley force of less than four thousand recruits with an assigned task of keeping the rebellious malcontents in line.<sup>1</sup>

Polk clearly saw the strategic importance of the area assigned to him, and he urged President Davis to combine all Confederate operations "west to east across the Mississippi Valley" under one commander. He suggested Albert Sidney Johnston as the man most likely to effect satisfactory coordination. Accordingly, on September 10, Johnston was assigned to the command of Department Number 2, a vast area embracing Tennessee and Arkansas, a part of Mississippi, and such sections of Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, and the Indian Territory where military operations were being carried on. Tennesseans were jubilant over the appointment of the tall, muscular general of commanding ap-

\* We have adhered to strict standards of economy in this chapter and have presented little more than a brief sketch of the military operations. For more extensive accounts the reader should consult Stanley F. Horn, *Army of Tennessee* (Indianapolis, 1941), and other works cited in the footnotes. For map of battle sites see *supra*, I, 396.

pearance, and the Confederate press in Nashville and Memphis hailed him with zealous enthusiasm.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most important task Johnston faced was that of devising an adequate defense for Tennessee. The General proceeded with haste, however, and soon established the "Line of the Cumberland" which he believed would be sufficient to protect the state and the western Confederacy. The thin line of troops extended from Columbus, Kentucky (on the Mississippi River), through Bowling Green, and to the Cumberland Gap on the east. Although seriously handicapped by lack of manpower, he determined to fortify the strategic points of Henry and Donelson\* (forts on the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, respectively, which Governor Isham G. Harris had begun to construct soon after the state seceded), and the Cumberland Gap, where East Tennessee Unionists threatened revolt. His undermanned forces soon were bolstered by a few Tennessee slaves (used in construction work) and regiments from Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Johnston found the people of Nashville generally apathetic about defense. While workers at the Nashville Plow Company beat plowshares into swords at a fairly rapid pace, the more important Nashville Powder Mills in October could provide only 400 pounds of their product per day, although officials of the company earlier had promised 10,000 pounds daily. Requests for slaves for use in construction work brought only scant response. The Nashville warehouses were laden with food, but General Zollicoffer's men in East Tennessee went hungry, so poorly were the transportation facilities coordinated. By November, Johnston had an army of 40,000 men, but they were inadequately clothed and fed and over one-half were without weapons.<sup>3</sup>

Despite the many vexatious problems, chief of which was inadequate manpower, Johnston realized that time was precious and that he should formulate defensive measures with the manpower and supplies on hand. He recognized that the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers were veritable highways from Ohio into the heart of Tennessee, northern Mississippi, and Alabama, and he ordered that work toward the completion of the strategic positions at Henry and Donelson proceed without delay.<sup>4</sup>

His fear for the safety of Tennessee was shared by Governor Harris, who on October 30 wrote President Jefferson Davis that he believed invasion along "the northern border of this state" was imminent. Harris requested the President to return the Tennessee troops, then stationed in Virginia, to their native state. Should the Federals obtain control of Tennessee then "the whole Confederacy" would face "incalculable mischief," the Governor warned. On November 20

\* Fort Henry was named for Gustavus A. Henry, Clarksville old-line Whig, who it will be recalled had been elected to the Confederate Senate. Fort Donelson was named for General Daniel S. Donelson, a West Point graduate and nephew of Rachel Donelson Jackson. Donelson had selected the site for the fort. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 76.





(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

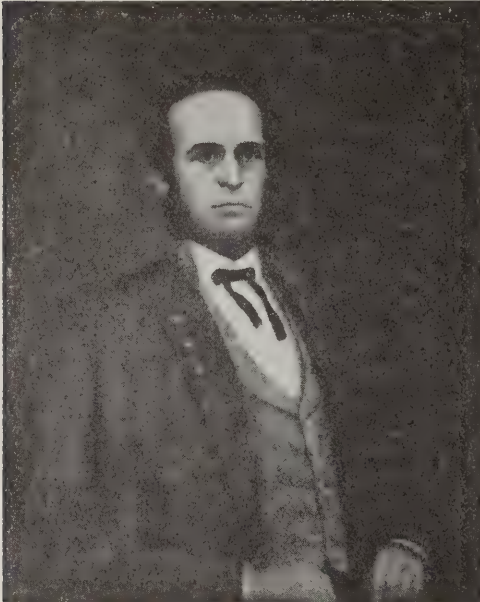
*"The General," Famous War Locomotive*

he sent terse messages to the governors of Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, requesting aid. "Columbus and River definitely threatened by very large force," he wrote. "Have you an armed force that you can possibly send to our aid?"<sup>5</sup>

In the meantime General Johnston had inspected the works at Forts Henry and Donelson and was appalled at the dilatory manner in which work proceeded. He summarily ordered Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman, a Kentuckian commanding at Hopkinsville, to assume charge of the two forts and to complete the works at once. "Sloth," Tilghman was told, would not "be tolerated."<sup>6</sup>

*Battles of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson*—The works were not complete when the Federals attacked in early February, 1862, under General Ulysses S. Grant, who had decided upon a combined land and river assault. On January 17 Captain Andrew H. Foote appeared with his gunboats in view of Fort Henry and fired a few long range shots at the stronghold before retreating. Tilghman, working night and day in preparation for the inevitable attack, still was not ready when seven gunboats and 18,000 men appeared on the morning of February 4. He

and Colonel Adolphus Heiman,\* his second in command, realizing that their 2,734 men could not withstand the Federal troops and gunboats, determined not to hold the fort but to send the poorly equipped men to Fort Donelson where a more determined stand could be made. Company B, First Tennessee Heavy Artillery, was retained to cover the retreat.<sup>7</sup>



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*General Bushrod Johnson*

with their divisions, and the 21,000 men were put to work throwing up breastworks, felling trees, and constructing abatis. Although Floyd, Pillow, and Buckner all held commissions as brigadier generals, the first named because of his seniority was in command. Later described by Grant as "no soldier," Floyd brought to Donelson an uneasy conscience and little by way of military acumen. While secretary of war under President Buchanan, he allegedly had misappropriated funds and unnecessarily transferred arms and ammunition to Southern forts. Therefore, Floyd feared capture, for he believed that he would be executed as a traitor should he fall into Federal hands. Pillow was next in rank. He had

A few shots were exchanged on February 4, and on the following day heavy bombardment began. The twelve Confederate cannon could not match the sixty-five naval guns; therefore, at 1:50 P.M., Tilghman, having already determined that the retreating men were well on their way to Fort Donelson, climbed to a parapet and waved a white flag. Fort Henry was surrendered to the naval forces, because Grant's men, having landed three miles downstream, had floundered in the slush and mud and had not reached the fort.<sup>8</sup>

Johnston feverishly planned the defense of Fort Donelson. Tilghman, now on his way to a Northern prison, was succeeded by Brigadier General Bushrod Johnson, who soon made way for General Pillow. Within a short time Brigadier General Simon B. Buckner and John B. Floyd were at Donelson

\* Heiman was an architect who designed many public and private buildings in Nashville, including the hospital for the insane on Murfreesboro Pike. John G. Frank, "Adolphus Heiman: Architect and Soldier," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, V (March, 1946), 35-57, gives an interesting account of his activity in Nashville and in the Confederate army.

served in the Mexican War, but his vain and presumptuous personality made cooperation with the other officers difficult. Buckner, perhaps the ablest of the three, was dominated by Pillow.<sup>9</sup>

The three despondent generals had little confidence in their operations even before the Federals appeared. They kept a close eye on Wynn's Ferry Road, over which they planned to retreat to Charlotte and then to Nashville if Federal fire became too galling. Even the imperturbable Johnston was pessimistic about their ability to hold the fort, and from his Nashville headquarters (to which he had recently moved from Bowling Green) he urged Floyd to keep open a line of retreat.<sup>10</sup>

At dawn on February 13, Grant's 15,000 men appeared some 700 yards from the outer defense of the fort. The Federal commander's strategy was the same as at Fort Henry; he planned for Foote to batter the fort into submission while he (Grant) blocked the escape routes. Little action occurred on the first day, however, as Grant maneuvered into a satisfactory position. One Federal brigade did attack the Confederate center but was beaten off. Of far greater importance was the sudden change in the weather on the thirteenth. The approach of a cold front changed the fair and mild afternoon into a cold, rainy evening and a near-zero night. When day broke on the fourteenth a two-inch snow had fallen, blanketing many of the wounded who had frozen during the night or had burned to death from fires set by the blazing artillery.<sup>11</sup>

On the fourteenth victory seemed within the grasp of the Confederates. The gunboats were driven off, and Foote himself was wounded twice.<sup>12</sup> On the fifteenth Floyd, ever fearful that he might become completely surrounded and isolated, sent Pillow and Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest to open Wynn's Ferry Road. This they accomplished by 3:00 P.M., giving Floyd the choice of unhindered retreat or vigorous pursuit of the temporarily demoralized Federals. The General did neither. In a moment of indecision he permitted Pillow to order the victorious forces back into the fort to attack a Federal movement on the right. Union General Lew Wallace then retook Wynn's Ferry Road.<sup>13</sup>

On the night of the fifteenth the three brigadier generals held a council of war at Dover Inn on the river bank. Despite Colonel Forrest's vehement insistence that they should not surrender, the generals were convinced that no possible way of escape remained, that their supply of ammunition was exhausted, and that their men were demoralized. Buckner insisted that an attempt to cut their way out would result in a massacre of their forces, that "no good would result from the sacrifice," and that the generals owed it to their men "to obtain the best terms of capitulation possible for them." The men, however, were indignant when they learned of the decision to surrender, and Forrest, vainly protesting against the defeatist attitude, determined to get "out of this place before they . . . [surrender] or bust hell wide open." Floyd and Pillow passed the command to Buckner, who surrendered unconditionally to General Grant.



The redoubtable Forrest, who was beginning to display his rare military genius, retreated across the back waters of the Cumberland without encountering the Federal army. He moved on to Cumberland Furnace where his men slept for a few hours, thence to Charlotte, and then to Nashville by nightfall of the following day. Floyd commandeered two steamboats and ferried his Virginia regiments across to safety. Pillow and General Bushrod Johnson also escaped before Buckner surrendered.<sup>14</sup>

The three generals were condemned severely by people throughout the Confederacy. Floyd was removed from the service and he died in Virginia in the following year. Pillow, although he was retained in the service, never again was given a position of command. Buckner, taken prisoner at the time, later was exchanged. He returned to the Army of Tennessee and rose to the rank of lieutenant general.<sup>15</sup>

Johnston's line now collapsed, and Nashville was abandoned. Triumphant, Don Carlos Buell rode into the state's capital a few days later (February 24) and Tennessee and northern Mississippi lay at the mercy of the Federals. The people of the state were dazed by the disastrous events which had transpired in so brief a period, and Nashvillians were in panic.<sup>16</sup>

*Shiloh*—Johnston now determined to evacuate Middle Tennessee and to make a stand at Corinth, Mississippi. Shortly before Donelson fell he had moved his forces from Bowling Green to Nashville. After Donelson, he fell back to Murfreesboro and retreated through Shelbyville and Fayetteville to Decatur, Alabama, where he crossed the Tennessee River. From there he moved by way of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad to Corinth. General P. G. T. Beauregard, at Jackson, Mississippi, had begun to move toward Corinth, and General Braxton Bragg, at Pensacola, Florida, also was transferred to the north Mississippi town.<sup>17</sup>

Knowing that Buell was moving southward from Nashville to join Grant, Johnston determined to meet the enemy before the juncture could be effected. Consequently, the Confederate army, some 40,000 strong, began a movement northward. Johnston intended having the army in line of battle at Pittsburg Landing, twenty-two miles northward, on the morning of April 4. It was not until two days later, however, that the noisy troops were ready for battle.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the delay and noise, Grant and Sherman were taken by complete surprise. Grant, careless and complacent, was at his Savannah headquarters nine miles away when firing began, and Sherman, although on the field of battle, had refused to take seriously the warning of his scouts that the Confederates were near. The daybreak attack found the Federals dressing, cooking, and eating in the company streets. Sherman was driven from his Shiloh Church headquarters, and Beauregard within a few hours had established his own headquarters at the small log church which Sherman so hastily had evacuated.<sup>19</sup>

Shortly before noon the Confederates received a serious check, and darkness began to set in before they had won the field. The Federals had stumbled into

"the old Sunken Road"—a washed out abandoned pike—which made a natural rifle pit. This was the "Hornets Nest," as the Confederates called it, and for seven hours it was the scene of fierce action. The day was spent before the Confederates took the strategic point. Shortly thereafter Beauregard gave the order to retire, and by 6:30 P.M. fighting had ended for the day.<sup>20</sup>

The Confederates had been victorious on the first day of the battle, but had paid a tremendous price. The gallant Johnston was numbered among the slain. The Confederate commander had been in the thick of the fight—his shoe sole had been ripped off earlier in the day by a Minié ball—and shortly after 2:00 P.M. he received a stray shot in the back of the right thigh which cut an artery and caused him to bleed to death. Ironically, some minutes earlier he had ordered his personal physician, Dr. D. W. Yandell, who could have stopped the bleeding easily with a tourniquet, toward the front to attend the wounded among the captured enemy. Governor Isham G. Harris was at the general's side when he died. Beauregard then assumed command.<sup>21</sup>

The long delay at the Hornet's Nest—or the lack of an extra hour or two of daylight—proved disastrous. During the night Buell, who had arrived the day before from Nashville but too late to fight, moved into position, and on the morning of the seventh the Federals had nearly 30,000 fresh troops ready for battle as compared with a smaller number of Confederates tired from the previous day's contest. Although not defeated, Beauregard decided that his weary divisions could not hold the field; to prolong the engagement, he believed, would only subject his men to unnecessary slaughter. In vain had he hoped for the arrival of General Earl Van Dorn and his 20,000 veterans of the Missouri and Arkansas campaigns. By four o'clock on the seventh his men were on their way to Corinth. Both sides had suffered tremendous losses in the two days of carnage.\* On the same day the South sustained another major disaster; Island Number 10 fell to the Federals, and 7,000 Confederates were taken prisoner.<sup>22</sup>

At Corinth the plucky Beauregard became so ill that he asked to be relieved, and the stern Braxton Bragg replaced him as commander of the Army of Tennessee.\*\* The new commander did not keep the troops in Mississippi for long. He received word that Buell was advancing in the direction of Chattanooga, and he ordered his own troops to move northward with all convenient

\* Confederate losses at Shiloh were as follows: 1,728 killed, 8,012 wounded, and 959 missing. Federal losses were: 1,754 killed, 8,408 wounded, and 2,885 captured or missing. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 143.

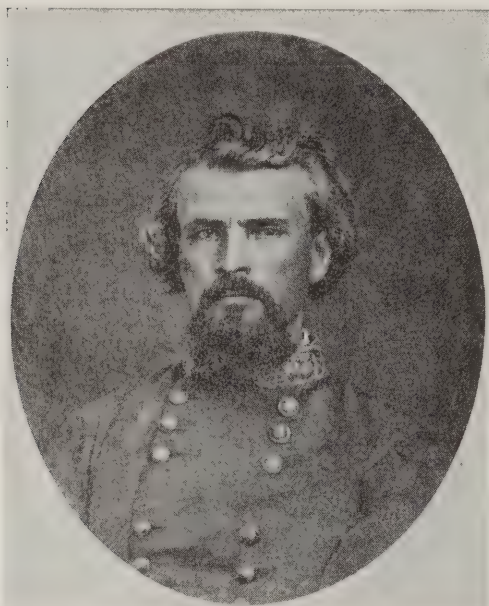
\*\* Bragg was never popular among either the enlisted men or the officers. One private wrote of him: "None of General Bragg's soldiers ever loved him. . . . He loved to crush the spirit of his men. The more of a hangdog look they had about them the better was General Bragg pleased. Not a single soldier in the whole army loved or respected him." Samuel R. Watkins, *Co. Aytch: Side Show of the Big Show* (Jackson, Tennessee, 1942), 71.

speed. He apparently had in mind a vigorous Tennessee campaign in which he would cut the Federal lines of supply.<sup>23</sup>

In Middle Tennessee the cavalry attacks of Nathan Bedford Forrest, John H. Morgan, and Joseph Wheeler in the meantime had been wreaking havoc among the Union troops. On July 13, 1862, for example, Forrest swooped down upon one of Buell's brigades at Murfreesboro and captured the entire force of 1,750 men, together with stores worth an estimated one million dollars. He came so close to Nashville that Andrew Johnson, recently appointed military governor of Tennessee, feared for the very existence of his military regime. Morgan, in

the meantime, had repulsed enemy assaults at Gallatin and Hartsville and had destroyed considerable quantities of the enemy supplies.<sup>24</sup>

Bragg's ultimate goal was the redemption of Middle Tennessee, but he first turned his attention to Kentucky where he hoped to attain a victory of sufficient proportions to win the Blue Grass State to the side of the Confederacy. On August 14, 1862, General Edmund Kirby Smith marched northward from Knoxville with 12,000 men. He won a smashing victory at Richmond, Kentucky, and occupied the blue grass region without difficulty. Two weeks later Bragg moved northward with 28,000 men. His troops were confident and in good spirits as they marched up the Sequatchie Valley, through Pikeville, Sparta, and Gainesboro, and into Glasgow, Kentucky.<sup>25</sup>



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*General Nathan Bedford Forrest*

In the meantime, General Buell, sensing Bragg's plan, set out for Louisville with 35,000 men, leaving General George H. Thomas in Nashville with three divisions. He soon was joined by other Federal troops, so that by October his forces numbered about 58,000.<sup>26</sup>

The most vigorous fighting of Bragg's Kentucky campaign took place at Perryville on October 8. Although the Confederates drove the enemy back, the vacillating nature of Bragg impelled him to retreat on October 9. The Confederate commander had become discouraged by the failure of Kentuckians to join his forces, and he feared that his troops, inferior in size to Buell's, would be crushed before he could escape. Therefore, he retreated in an orderly man-



ner, and in early November his army joined Breckinridge and Forrest in Murfreesboro, where they made plans for a raid on Nashville.<sup>27</sup>

Both Bragg and Buell were criticized for their conduct of the Kentucky campaign. Before the Federal general could reach Nashville he was replaced by General W. S. Rosecrans. Bragg retained his command, but the tarnish on his prestige became a little more pronounced. Buell was court-martialed in Nashville.<sup>28</sup>

*Stone's River*—The two armies did not remain stationary very long. Bragg establishing headquarters at Murfreesboro with less than 40,000 men, announced his determination to occupy all of Middle Tennessee "between the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers." His army was spread widely. General William J. Hardee commanded the left flank which was stationed at Triune and Eagleville, twenty miles west of Murfreesboro; General J. P. McCown held the right at Readyville, twelve miles east of Murfreesboro; and Polk held the center at Stone's River, just on the western outskirts of the town. Rosecrans made immediate plans to place Bragg on the defensive, and on December 26 began a movement toward his center. The Confederate commander needed time to pull his scattered detachments together, and General Wheeler harassed the enemy to such an extent that four days were required for the troops to march the thirty miles between Nashville and Stone's River.\*<sup>29</sup>

At daybreak of the thirty-first the battle began when a detachment of Bragg's men encountered a company of Federals a few miles west of Murfreesboro at the juncture of the Franklin Pike and Gresham Lane. By nightfall Rosecrans' troops were pushed back a distance of four or five miles, and the Confederate victory was complete. The noise of long wagon trains rumbling toward Nashville carrying the wounded convinced Bragg that the entire army was in retreat. He wired Richmond that "The enemy has yielded his strong position and is falling back . . . God has granted us a happy New Year." He therefore was surprised on the morning of January 1, 1863, to find Rosecrans still encamped in the immediate vicinity. Neither commander, however, was willing to renew the activity on that day.<sup>30</sup>

Victory escaped the grasp of the Confederates on January 2 when Rosecrans was reenforced with fresh troops. The tide turned in the afternoon when General John C. Breckinridge was ordered to seize a ridge just east of the river, from which vantage point Bragg believed the Federal center could be pushed back. Both Breckinridge and Polk advised against such a movement, because

\* At La Vergne, for example, about half way between Nashville and Murfreesboro, Wheeler rode entirely around the enemy, destroying 300 wagons loaded with stores valued at one million dollars. In other raids in the four-day period he captured several hundred prisoners, destroyed wagon trains of ammunition and medical supplies, and left a trail of devastation in his wake. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 199.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—General Nathan Bedford Forrest Statue and Grave in Forrest Park*

the enemy controlled the high ground just west of the river from which point they could rake Breckinridge's men with artillery fire. Bragg, however, refused to withdraw the order. When the Confederate attack first began it appeared that Breckinridge might be successful, but as his troops came nearer the range of Major John Mendenhall's fifty-eight cannon which fired 100 shots per minute, his ranks were decimated. Breckinridge hastily retreated beyond the range of the deadly weapons, but 1,700 of his men were slaughtered in the eighty-minute fight. No ground was won or lost, but the futile encounter demoralized the Confederates and destroyed their confidence in the already unpopular Bragg.\*<sup>31</sup>

On January 3 the Confederate commander determined upon retreat, and by nightfall the unhappy soldiers had begun a slow movement toward Chattanooga. They were convinced that they had won the battle of Murfreesboro,

\* Losses in the battle were as follows: Confederates: 11,739; Federals, 12,906. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses*, 97.

but that Bragg's mistakes had withheld the fruits of victory from them. The hapless general again came under criticism throughout the Confederacy, and Joseph E. Johnston, his immediate superior, held a three weeks' investigation of his conduct. Polk and other subordinates urged that he be transferred to another command, since his effectiveness with the Army of Tennessee allegedly had ended.<sup>32</sup>

When the retreating general ascertained that Rosecrans was not in pursuit, his army went into winter quarters in the Shelbyville-Tullahoma area. Forrest, however, with less than 4,000 men, spent the winter in wreaking havoc with Union communication lines at Trenton, Humboldt, Union City, Lexington, and other points in West Tennessee.

By late June, 1863, Rosecrans, with 70,000 men, was ready to march against the Confederates, and Bragg's forces began a slow retreat toward Chattanooga. By June 30 Rosecrans was in Manchester, and Bragg made plans to fight at Cowan. When Rosecrans halted temporarily, Bragg decided to push on across Sewanee Mountain and then to Chattanooga. Once again the Confederate commander was severely criticized. Many people thought that he should have given battle, and others condemned him for not destroying the Nashville and Chattanooga rail line or at least damaging the railroad tunnel just beyond Cowan so that it would not be accessible to the Federals.<sup>33</sup>

Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland\* began to move on Bragg's Army of Tennessee in mid-August. By a series of brilliant maneuvers the Federal general, without loss, pushed Bragg out of Chattanooga and into northern Georgia. Rosecrans, apparently believing the Confederates would continue their retreat to Atlanta, confidently pressed his enemy. The Federal commander had become overconfident, and he readily and eagerly received rumors that Bragg moved toward Rome, Georgia.\*\* Not investigating the source of the reports, Rosecrans tossed caution to the wind and recklessly plunged across the Tennessee River and into northern Georgia. Here he fell into a trap from which only Grant was able to extricate him. On September 13, to his amazement, he found some twenty miles due south of Chattanooga Confederates in abundance in the vicinity

\* The Federal armies bore names relating to the rivers near which they originally operated. Hence the names Army of the Tennessee, Army of the Cumberland, and Army of the Potomac. Names of Confederate armies related to the state or locality in which they principally fought. Hence the names, Army of Tennessee and Army of Northern Virginia.

\*\* One report which no doubt influenced Rosecrans was received from a "Mr. Thompson" of Chattanooga, whom Rosecrans described as "a very loyal citizen . . . who claims to have a son in our secret service." Thompson's report was as follows: "The army has retreated to Rome; . . . if we pursue vigorously they will not stop short of Atlanta. Troops badly demoralized; all feel that they are whipped; one-seventh of the troops mostly naked; the rations for three days would make one good meal." O.R., Ser. I, Vol. XXX, Pt. 3, p. 481.



of McLemore's Cove, Pigeon Mountain, and Lafayette. He immediately sought concentration of his widely spread army, while Bragg prepared to fight.<sup>34</sup>

*Chickamauga*—Not until September 18 did Bragg issue an order for battle, and on the early morning of the following day the Army of Tennessee crossed the Chickamauga River to meet Rosecrans in what was to prove one of the bloodiest days of the war. Bragg's original intention had been to trap the Federals in a narrow cove at McLemore's, and there slice them to pieces or else force them to surrender. General George H. Thomas, Rosecrans' able subordinate, moved rapidly, however, and rendered Bragg's plans ineffective. For the rest of the day the fighting was indecisive and both armies held their positions. On September 20 the tide turned in favor of the Confederates. Late in the preceding day Generals James Longstreet and John B. Hood arrived from Virginia,\* and these two veterans with their armies of the eastern campaigns inspired Bragg's men with confidence. Hood, who was to lose his right leg the next day, appeared on the battlefield with his left arm in a sling—a memento of the Battle of Gettysburg. Longstreet came with inspiring words from Robert E. Lee. By afternoon the veteran Virginians had ripped Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland to shreds and had hurled the enemy back toward Chattanooga. Only the gallant stand of General Thomas (himself a Virginian but loyal to the Union) on Snodgrass Hill prevented a complete massacre of the Federal troops. Charles A. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, who was with Rosecrans at the time, wrote that "Never in any battle" had he witnessed "such a discharge of musketry. Bull Run\*\* had nothing more terrible than the rout and flight of these veteran soldiers." The historian John Fiske, who saw Rosecrans when the Federal commander finally arrived in Chattanooga thoroughly beaten, wrote that he could "not soon forget the terrible look of the brave man, stunned by sudden calamity. In later years I used occasionally to meet Rosecrans," Fiske wrote, "and always felt that I could see the shadow of Chickamauga upon his noble face."<sup>35</sup>

Two developments had prevented the complete destruction of Rosecrans' army: the gallant stand made by Thomas, and Bragg's refusal to pursue the retreating Federals and capitalize upon the victory within his grasp. Longstreet, confident that he could overtake the fleeing army before it reached Chattanooga—and certainly before it could gain Nashville—was dumbfounded

\* They were delayed considerably by Burnside's occupation of Knoxville on September 1, and his subsequent destruction of railroads between Chattanooga and Virginia. The Confederates thus found it necessary to take the circuitous route to Chattanooga by way of the Carolinas. Fink, "East Tennessee Campaign," 84-5.

\*\* Bull Run, Virginia, was the first major encounter of the war. The Federal troops were reported by Northern observers to have fled in terror from the field and in the process tossed aside muskets, ammunition, blankets, canteens, and knapsacks in order that they might flee rapidly from the galling fire of the Confederates.

at Bragg's sullen refusal to sanction a pursuit. Apparently the commanding general, who had claimed victory prematurely at Murfreesboro, now could not believe a complete victory was within his grasp.<sup>36</sup>

The victory, which proved to be of little value because it was put to no good advantage, was won at a tremendous cost. Longstreet lost nearly 45 per cent of his men in two hours of fighting. The terrors of the battle were accentuated when the dry grass and leaves caught fire and roasted alive many of the wounded who lay on the battlefield unable to move.<sup>37</sup>

Although Bragg had tossed away his opportunities after Chickamauga, the Confederates still had a chance to capture the Federal army in Chattanooga. Once again, however, the luckless Army of Tennessee was hindered by its irresolute commander. Instead of pressing his attack against the demoralized enemy, Bragg changed his tactics and besieged the Federals in hopes of starving them into submission.\*\* Washington authorities, realizing the danger, soon replaced Rosecrans with the dynamic Thomas; they also placed Grant over all operations east of the Mississippi. The doughty warrior, seeing the danger of the Federal position at Chattanooga, hastened to that city to assume active charge of operations.<sup>38</sup>

*Battle of Chattanooga*—While Grant, Thomas, and Sherman (the last named general having been transferred from Mississippi with his Army of the Tennessee) prepared for battle, Bragg fatuously dispersed his troops and bickered with his immediate subordinates. On the eve of battle he dispatched his ablest general, Longstreet, to Knoxville in a fruitless effort to disperse Burnside's army, which had moved into East Tennessee from Cincinnati. Several skirmishes occurred before the main encounter of November 23-25 began, and all resulted in Confederate defeats. The main battle began in a dense fog at the base of Lookout Mountain, just south of Chattanooga, when General Joseph Hooker attacked the weak right flank of the Confederates and moved it back. On the next day Bragg was pushed farther, and finally he concentrated his army at Missionary Ridge. The Confederates held on the twenty-fourth, but on the following day Sherman's charging bluecoats swept the rifle pits at the base of the mountains and smashed the infantry back in a savage hand-to-hand encounter. The Confederate center was broken during the afternoon, after which the Federals charged up the mountain and caused the demoralized Southerners to flee in panic. Bragg and Breckinridge were unsuccessful in stemming the retreat and narrowly escaped capture themselves. According to Bragg, "each [soldier] appeared to be struggling for his personal safety, regardless of his duty and

\* Confederate killed and wounded totaled 16,986; the Federals numbered only 11,413. Livermore, *Number and Losses*, 105-06.

\*\* Bragg probably would have been successful had he realized the importance of the Tennessee River; the Federals, however, received considerable supplies by way of the river and thus staved off starvation. Davidson, *The Tennessee*, II, 63-68.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

*Chattanooga—Missionary Ridge, Famed Battleground, extending seven miles through the city*

character." The defeat, which one author ranks in importance with Gettysburg and Vicksburg, was a serious blow to the Confederates, who now retreated to Dalton, Georgia, where they went into winter quarters.<sup>39</sup>

The defeat was the final blow to Bragg's pride and prestige. As mentioned earlier, the Confederate general was never popular with either the enlisted men or the officers, and he frequently became embroiled in controversies with the latter. Immediately after Chickamauga the wrangle became so heated that President Jefferson Davis hastened from Richmond to Bragg's headquarters in order to pour oil on troubled waters. There he heard the leading Southern generals—



Polk, Longstreet, Buckner, and others—tell of their lack of confidence in their commander. After Chattanooga the hapless Bragg attempted to shift the blame for the fiasco to his subordinates, as he had done in other misfortunes, but the wrath of the entire Confederacy now was turned upon him. He was removed, and Joseph E. Johnston, who held the confidence of enlisted men and officers alike, later was appointed to the command of the Western army.<sup>40</sup>

As mentioned, General Ambrose E. Burnside in the meantime had moved his army to Knoxville, and Longstreet was sent to drive him out. When the Southern general arrived in mid-November he decided to lay siege to the city, and on November 29 he made an unsuccessful assault on the Federal forces within Fort Sanders. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Grant then dispatched Sherman to the aid of the besieged Burnside. Longstreet, upon receiving information that Sherman was within a few miles of Knoxville, withdrew toward Virginia and left Tennessee completely in the hands of the Federals. The Army of Tennessee was to launch one last desperate campaign into its homeland, however, in November-December, 1864.<sup>41</sup>

Sherman soon withdrew from the Knoxville area and began to push Johnston southward toward Atlanta.\* The Confederate commander, unable to wage effective battle against so superior a force, inaugurated a policy of systematic retreat by which he hoped to lure the Federals into an unfavorable position. His failure to arrest the advance of the enemy displeased President Davis (who cared little for Johnston anyway), and in July, General John Bell Hood was given command of the Army of Tennessee.<sup>42</sup>

Hood, who was to bring the Army of Tennessee back for a futile assault on the Federals at Franklin and Nashville, was only thirty-one years of age when he assumed command. He was graduated from West Point in 1853 and had served in Texas under Albert Sidney Johnston. As mentioned earlier, his left arm had been shattered at Gettysburg and hung lifeless at his side or sometimes in a sling across his chest. At Chickamauga, where he led troops which broke through the Federal lines and precipitated the enemy's retreat, he had suffered a wound in his right thigh which necessitated a battlefield amputation just below the hip. Although some questioned the efficiency of a commander whose only useful arm carried a crutch as a necessary aid in walking, Hood retained the utmost confidence of President Davis.<sup>43</sup>

\* General Leonidas Polk, who had been with the Army of Tennessee from the beginning, was killed on July 14, just north of Atlanta. He was in the company of Generals Joseph E. Johnston and Hardee, inspecting the Pine Mountain sector, when a shell from a Federal Parrott rifled gun struck him in the side. It severed his left arm, passed through his body and right arm, and exploded when it struck a tree nearby. As his son later poignantly expressed it, "a cannon-shot crashed through his breast, and opening a wide door, let free that indomitable spirit." William M. Polk, *Leonidas Polk, Bishop and General* (2 vols., New York, 1893), I, 349; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 332.

The Confederate commander decided upon bold strategy. He had become discouraged with the Atlanta campaign. This series of maneuvers had lasted forty-five days and, although Sherman lost more than twice as many men as Hood, still by September 6 the Federals controlled the city. Hood's bold plan, which had the approval of Beauregard, his immediate superior, and the tacit approval of Davis, was to surprise Sherman by moving the Army of Tennessee northward in a quick dash across northern Alabama and then into Middle Tennessee. He hoped to cut Sherman's supply lines; some newspaper editors encouraged him by predicting that the Federals would be left to a fate similar to that of Napoleon's army in Russia in 1812. If successful in gaining Nashville and the vast store of supplies there, Hood dreamed of taking Louisville and Cincinnati, and then of joining Lee's forces in Richmond. Heavy rains made movement difficult, and it was not until November 16 that Hood crossed a hastily-constructed pontoon bridge at Guntersville, Alabama, and marched into Tennessee. His effective fighting force at this time consisted of about 38,000 men.<sup>44</sup>

Sherman in the meantime decided upon the bold strategy of staging a punitive and destructive march to the ocean, designed to "make Georgia howl." Before moving southward, however, he left General Thomas, "the Rock of Chickamauga," in defense of Tennessee and assigned to him a force sufficient to arrest the northward advance of Hood.<sup>45</sup>

*Franklin*—The first serious engagement of Hood's campaign in Tennessee occurred at Franklin. General John M. Schofield, Hood's friend and classmate at West Point, had just returned from an unsuccessful pursuit of Forrest into West Tennessee. Schofield was at Pulaski when Hood entered the state but he quickly moved toward Nashville. He had reached Columbia when the Confederate commander arrived in Maury County in late November. Hood planned to crush the Federals at Spring Hill, but because of confusion partly caused by the ensuing darkness, Schofield was able to march practically through Hood's forces on the night of November 29 and to move on to Franklin. The Confederate commander was enraged when he awoke on the morning of November 30 and learned that his quarry had escaped. He lashed his forces into double-quick time and overtook Schofield at Franklin in mid-afternoon. The jittery Federal commander pleaded with Thomas to send reinforcements, but he could not do so in time, since Hood launched an attack immediately.<sup>46</sup>

The Confederates drove the enemy from the field after five hours of fighting, and Schofield, leaving his dead and wounded on the battlefield, retreated during the night to the safety of the fortifications at Nashville. Hood thus was left in possession of the field, but he had paid a fearful price. The Federals, fighting behind breastworks, had lost little more than two thousand men; Hood's dead and wounded amounted to more than three times that number.<sup>47</sup>

*Nashville*—Although Grant feared that Hood might push immediately toward Louisville or Chicago, the bold young Kentuckian\* determined to occupy the hills just south of Nashville and attempt to pull Thomas out for battle. Because Nashville was so well fortified, Hood preferred not to meet his enemy in a frontal assault. The doughty Confederate did not have long to wait, however, for Thomas acted quickly. The ice having melted by the fifteenth, the Federal commander on that day politely checked out of the Saint Cloud Hotel, and moved on to the battle line where his men had been fighting since daylight.<sup>48</sup>

The two-day encounter (December 15-16) resulted in disaster for the Confederates. On the first day the Federals made small holes in the Confederate right and center, but the collapse of the left wing caused Hood to retreat two miles during the night to the foot of the Brentwood Hills. On the sixteenth the battle, beginning at 9:00 o'clock, resulted in complete victory for the Federals. Although during the morning the Confederates threw back wave after wave of both white and Negro troops, by afternoon Schofield's infantry and cavalry had broken completely the Confederate resistance, and by nightfall the ragged and bloody Southerners, "without food and without hope," retreated southward. The majority of the infantrymen were barefooted, except for a few who had wrapped the hides of freshly killed horses about their feet. Thomas, with about 70,000 men, listed his killed and wounded at slightly less than 4,000. Hood, with about 23,000 men, lost not more than 1,500 killed and wounded.<sup>49</sup>

The Battle of Nashville was the last engagement of major significance in Tennessee. The retreating Army of Tennessee stopped at Brentwood long enough to form a semblance of organization and then proceeded southward. At Columbia they were joined by Forrest who had retreated from Murfreesboro. They were harassed by detachments of Federals until they reached Pulaski on December 26. There General Forrest made a strong stand and discouraged the enemy to such an extent that the Federals showed no further disposition to give battle.

Forrest's encounter was the last action of any consequence within the state. In less than four months the surrender of General Lee at Appomatox, followed by General Johnston's capitulation near Durham, North Carolina, ended the Southern bid for independence. Most of the demoralized Confederates who had fought at Nashville had joined General Johnston when he surrendered on April 16. Deaths at Franklin and Nashville, sickness, furloughs, and desertions had reduced the Army of Tennessee to an effective fighting force of only about 5,000 when the men finally joined Johnston.<sup>50</sup>

In this brief sketch of military activity in Tennessee little attention has been given to the real heroes of the war—the common soldiers, many of whom

\* Hood considered Texas his adopted state, and was sometimes referred to as "the gallant Hood of Texas." He was born, however, in Kentucky.





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Birthplace and Home of Sam Davis, youthful scout of Confederate Army, who was executed by Federals. This shrine is one mile from Smyrna in Middle Tennessee.*

gave their lives in the four years of bloody strife. Such a history would not be complete, however, without at least brief mention of the character of the men who trudged—many of them barefoot and forlorn—behind the Johnstons, Bragg, Hood, and Grant. Thousands of Tennesseans answered the call of duty and shouldered a gun in a cause they believed was just. Nearly 100,000 Tennesseans were arrayed on the side of the South, and nearly one-half that number fought for the North.\*<sup>51</sup>

Every schoolboy knows the events surrounding the execution of Sam Davis, the young Confederate who was hanged as a spy on November 27, 1863, near

\* About 32,000 whites were charged to the Union quota, and probably 7,000 enlisted in Kentucky regiments. More than 20,000 Negroes were recruited under direct authority of the Federal government, but were not charged to the quota. O.R., Ser. III, Vol. IV, 73, 1270.

Pulaski. "I would die a thousand deaths," the youth exclaimed when Federal officers gave him a final opportunity to save his life by implicating others, "before I would betray a friend." In a recently discovered unpublished diary, written by a Northern soldier named J. C. Harwood, additional light is shed on the execution by one who witnessed it:

The spy Saml. Davis in the Confederate Service was executed at 10-20 A. M., he died hard but when he took his place on the Scaffold he never paled a bit but stood it like a hero[.] he Hung 20 minutes then was taken down and placed in his coffin and removed from the grounds[.] the Prisoner was seen to smile before ascent [ascending] the scaffold[.]

No less glory should hallow the memory of DeWitt S. Jobe, a twenty-year-old Rutherford County lad who, as a Coleman scout, was captured by fifteen soldiers of the 115th Ohio Regiment not far from his home. When his captors attempted to take valuable secret documents from him he fought them off, broke away, and fled. When he finally was apprehended some time later, Jobe, realizing that his papers now would be seized, ripped them to shreds and swallowed the pieces. The infuriated Federals then tied a leather strap around his neck and began to choke him, but he refused to divulge the source of his information or the contents of his papers. They then proceeded to beat him unmercifully with gun butts; the beating rendered him unconscious, blinded him, and tore out most of his upper front teeth. Death finally came to the hapless but heroic youth when his tormentors dragged him by the leather strap they had placed around his neck.<sup>52</sup>

Considerable family pride was to be found in all the military units, and in some cases all of the male members of a family would fight together in the same company. A surgeon wrote in 1864 of family pride and heroism in the Army of Tennessee:

Five brothers all in one company had made good soldiers, & one of them deserted, was caught, court-martialed, & sentenced to be shot. The other four brothers went to Gen'l [Joseph E.] Johnston & begged for his life & promised that he would make a good soldier & never desert any more, & Johnston pardoned him.

When DeWitt Smith, a cousin of DeWitt S. Jobe, heard of the manner in which his relative was slain, he left Bragg's army and returned to Middle Tennessee to wage his own private war of revenge. He killed more than fifty Yankees before being slain by Federal cavalymen near Nolensville.<sup>53</sup>

Both the common soldiers and the officers apparently worried considerably more about their loved ones at home than about their own comforts. The invasion of Tennessee in early 1862 caused consternation in the minds of many Tennesseans stationed outside the state. Private Burton Warfield, then in Ken-

tucky, wrote to his wife, Anna, in Columbia to deplore the fall of Fort Henry. "Many a brave and gallant son of the South may fall in her defense," he wrote, "but conquer us they never can. They may over run us and dispoil [*sic*] us of our homes but from every hill top and from every secluded spot the missles [*sic*] of death will be sent into their ranks from a foe they can never overcome." Warfield closed with a somber note: "My fingers are numb with cold . . . ." Captain J. C. Spurlock, then stationed in South Carolina, feared for his wife and loved ones in Manchester. "I must confess," he wrote in February, 1862,

that the future of Tennessee is dark and forbidding. I hardly know what to advise you all to do in case the enemy continues to advance and our forces fall back, but I would say to keep out of the neighborhood of both armies if possible. I have seen something of life in the vicinity of armies and know that it is by no means pleasant especially for ladies. Soldiers are generally thoughtless and frequently reckless and many of them have little more respect for friend than for foe.

Monroe Bearden, stationed in Kentucky, was not to be consoled. "The prolific valleys and verdant woodlands of Tennessee are to be gazed upon no more, as a land of freedom and independence," he wrote, "but as a land poluted by the invasion of a mercenary foe—the vanquishers of our rights, liberties and institutions." He believed that "the fame and chivalry of Tennessee" was cast "in utter obscurity from whence it can never rise" when the troops surrendered at Fort Donelson, and he placed the blame upon Johnston and Harris.<sup>54</sup>

Most of all the men wanted news from home, and many expressed sentiments indicating intense homesickness. "I want to see you and the children offul Bad[.] I think of you every hour in the day and dream of you oftines when a Sleep," James Parrott wrote in 1863 to his wife at Fayetteville. W. C. Tripp wrote in 1863 to his wife Martha in Moore County:

As to you wanting to see me there is no use in talking[.] you cannot want to see me as bad as I want to see you and the children and pop and mother . . . . Martha, . . . hit Seams like hit has Bin a month Sence I heard from you[.] I want to hur from you and the children and all the rest of the folks[.] My Dear wife, Martha, I hope thar is A day A coming whin I can come home and live in pease with you and the children[.] if thay hant I hope to meet you all in hevin war [where] thar is no more war troubles[.]

Burton Warfield, in a Northern prison in 1863, wrote to his wife in Columbia: "Give my love to mother. I often think of her and I know she will remember me in her prairs. Kiss the little ones for me."<sup>55</sup>

A chaplain who accompanied Lee's army wrote in 1862 to his daughter: "I could tell you a thousand thrilling incidents indicative of the glorious courage





(Photo by Ralph D. Whitesell)

*Farmington—Confederate Cemetery*

of our soldiers." Certainly the men in Tennessee were no less courageous than those in Virginia. Within recent decades many people have gone to considerable trouble and expense to establish their descent from high ranking officers of both the North and South. In view of the heroic conduct of the men of lower rank it would seem that they should take even more pride in their antecedents if they could find among them the names of such men as Sam Davis, DeWitt S. Jobe, Burton Warfield, and others like them. For it was these men and their kind, whether they fought for the North or for the South, "whose strength was the bedrock of their respective causes and whose greatness made their war one of the most inspiring in the history of embattled humanity."<sup>56</sup>

## CHAPTER XXVII—NOTES

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3. O. R., Ser. I, Vol. IV, 193; Peter Franklin Walker, "Building a Tennessee Army: Autumn, 1861," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (June, 1957), 110-11.
4. O. R., Ser. I, Vol. IV, 560; Walker, "Holding the Tennessee Line," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (September, 1957), 239-40; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 76.
5. Isham G. Harris, "Letter Book," in Tennessee State Library, Nashville.
6. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 76-77; Walker, "Holding Tennessee Line," 239-40.
7. Walker, "Command Failure: The Fall of Forts Henry and Donelson," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (December, 1957), 337; John G. Frank, "Adolphus Heiman: Architect and Soldier," *ibid.*, V (March, 1946), 35-57.
8. Walker, "Command Failure," 339-42; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 81-83; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 79-81. The story is told in detail in O.R., Ser. I, Vol. VII, 119-52.
9. Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant* (2 vols., New York, 1885), I, 294-95; Walker, "Command Failure," 345.
10. *Ibid.*, 342-43, 351; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 85.
11. *Ibid.*, 88-89.
12. *Ibid.*, 90.
13. *Ibid.*, 92-93; Walker, "Command Failure," 353-54.
14. Quotation from Adam R. Johnson, *The Partisan Rangers of the Confederate States Army* (Louisville, 1904), 67. Robert Selph Henry, "First with the Most" Forrest (New York, 1944), 63; General Thomas Jordan and J. P. Pryor, *The Campaigns of Lieut.-General N. B. Forrest* (New Orleans, 1868), 99-101; Walker, "Command Failure," 357; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 82-85; Walter F. Meier (ed.), "A Confederate Private at Fort Donelson," *American Historical Review*, XXX (April, 1926), 480. See O. R., Ser. I, Vol. VII, 157-416, for a detailed report on the battle. Floyd's report to Johnston is published in *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, V (October, 1919), 152-55.
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16. *Ibid.*, 103-04. The occupation of Nashville will be discussed in the next chapter.
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19. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 126; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 117-18. For a recent appraisal of Shiloh, see T. Harry Williams, "Beauregard at Shiloh," *Civil War History*, I (March, 1955), 17-34.
20. Johnston, *Johnston*, 603-06; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 132; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 120.
21. Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York, 1954), 163; Johnston, *Johnston*, 615.
22. Johnston, *Johnston*, 637-42; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 139-43, 145; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 122-23; Thomas L. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America: 1861-65* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1957), 142-43.
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25. *Ibid.*, 163, 165-67; Eaton, *Southern Confederacy*, 193; Joseph H. Parks, *General Edmund Kirby Smith*, C.S.A. (Baton Rouge, 1954), 201-04.
26. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 165-67.
27. *Ibid.*, 189; Parks, *Kirby Smith*, 200-250.
28. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 189.
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31. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 207-8; Livermore, *Numbers and Losses*, 142.
32. Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 223-26.
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35. John Fiske, *The Mississippi Valley in the Civil War* (Boston, 1900), 277n; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 270; Livermore, *Numbers and Losses*, 142. For an able biography of General Thomas, see Freeman Cleaves, *Rock of Chickamauga; The Life of General George H. Thomas* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1948); Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga Country*, 211-29.
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39. *Ibid.*, 283; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 293, 298-99, 301; Thomas R. Hay, "The Battle of Chattanooga," *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, VIII (March, 1924), 139-40; Patten, *Tennessee Chronicle*, 205; Harold S. Fink, "The East Tennessee Campaign and the Battle of Knoxville," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 29 (1957), 87.
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43. John P. Dyer, *The Gallant Hood* (Indianapolis 1950), 13; Horn, *Battle of Nashville*, 5-6.
44. *Ibid.*, 7, 13-14; Henry, *Story of the Confederacy*, 423-25; Dyer, *Gallant Hood*, 281-82.
45. Horn, *Battle of Nashville*, 7-8.
46. *Ibid.*, 18-19; O.R., Ser. I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 343-44; Dyer, *Gallant Hood*, 291-93, 294; Horn, *Army of Tennessee*, 403-05; Sims Crownover, "The Battle of Franklin," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XIV (December, 1955), 291-322 (an excellent map accompanies this article); Robert Selph Henry (ed.), *As They Saw Forrest* (Jackson, 1956), 209; Turner, *Maury County*, 210 ff.
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51. O.R., Ser. III, Vol. IV, pp. 73, 1270.
52. J. C. Harwood Diary, 1863-1864, in State Library, Nashville; Notes on DeWitt S. Jobe, papers in possession of Bob Womack, Murfreesboro; W. J. McMurray, *History of the Twentieth Tennessee Regiment Volunteer Infantry, C.S.A.* (Nashville, 1904), 429-31; For another contemporary account of the death of Sam Davis, see Sarah Ridley Trimble (ed.), "Behind the Lines of Middle Tennessee, 1863-1865: The Journal of Bettie Ridley Blackmore," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XII (March, 1953), 68-69.
53. Enoch L. Mitchell (ed.), "Letters of a Confederate Surgeon of the Army of Tennessee to his Wife," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, V (March, 1946), 167; McMurray, *The Twentieth Tennessee Regiment*, 431; Bell Irvin Wiley, "A Time of Greatness," *Journal of Southern History*, XXII (February, 1956), 20. Wiley is the dean of the scholars of the common soldier in both North and South. See his *The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy* (Indianapolis, 1943), and *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Indianapolis, 1952).
54. Warfield letter dated February 8, 1862; Spurlock letter dated February 20, 1862; and Bearden letter dated March 16, 1862, are in possession of Bob Womack, Murfreesboro.
55. Parrott letter dated June 15, 1863; Tripp letters dated March 29, May 30, and June 7, 1863; and Warfield letter, dated only 1863, are in possession of Bob Womack, Murfreesboro.
56. Wiley, "A Time of Greatness," 30, 34-35. The author is indebted to Professor Wiley for the last paragraph.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII

### *The Civil War: Internal Affairs*

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THE HARRIS ADMINISTRATION retained control for less than a year after Tennessee became a part of the Confederacy. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Federal army made a successful invasion of the state in January, 1862, and by February of that year had occupied the capital. West Tennessee soon was to be placed under martial law, and the eastern section soon became the scene of bitter disputes between native Unionists and secessionists.

*Unrest in East Tennessee*—The intense Union movement in East Tennessee was a problem of major concern for the Harris administration, and the situation was not quieted after the government collapsed. Isolated and poor, dominated—or at least strongly influenced—by such leaders as Brownlow and Johnson, without many slaves and without a feeling of attachment to the “slavocracy” of Middle and West Tennessee, long conscious of themselves as a “sectional minority” in the state, and confident of Federal assistance, the East Tennesseans stood by the national government, thus destroying the unanimity of the secession sentiment in the state.

Harris at first pursued a conciliatory policy with regard to the eastern section. On June 20 he expressed his views to General Pillow. Although many people in East Tennessee were “bent on rebellion” against the state, he was “satisfied that forbearance and conciliation is the true policy to be pursued toward them . . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Members of the state legislature and leaders of the press were in agreement with the Governor. Legislators refused to require a test oath which might enable vigorous secession leaders to crush the rebellious movement in East Tennessee, but instead they adopted a resolution expressing confidence that even yet the loyalty and patriotism of those who had voted against secession would impel them to join with the rest of the state against Northern aggression. Legislators also received in a conciliatory manner the Greeneville “Declaration of Grievances,” in which East Tennesseans condemned secession and petitioned legislators for permission to form a separate state. While denying them separate statehood, the lawmakers assured the people of the eastern section that no

conscript law drafting them into Confederate service would be enacted. The editor of the Nashville *Republican Banner* urged the eastern people to consider the enormous capital outlay necessary for separate statehood. He asserted that the people from that section for years had received benefits from the state far in excess of the taxes they had paid into the treasury. He estimated that, if East Tennesseans were allowed to separate, the tax rate in some counties would be as high as fifty-six cents on each hundred dollars' valuation, instead of the prevailing rate of seven cents. The editor of the Nashville *Daily Patriot* likewise urged unity. East Tennessee, he declared, was the father of Middle and West Tennessee; all three sections had common ideals and background, and now they should remain together in a time of crisis. Several editors suggested a change of governors if such would pacify the people of the east.<sup>2</sup>

Felix Zollicoffer, well known in Knoxville where as a young man he had served as a journeyman printer with the Knoxville *Register*, was selected by state authorities to command troops in the eastern section. A former Whig, Zollicoffer was believed to be well qualified for the task of influencing the East Tennesseans to join the Secessionists. Upon his arrival in Knoxville he announced to the people that

The military authorities are not here to offend or injure the people but to insure peace . . . . All who desire peace can have peace, by quietly and harmlessly pursuing their lawful avocations [*sic*]. But Tennessee, having taken her stand with her sister States of the South, her honor and safety require that no aid shall be given within her borders to the arms of the tyrant Lincoln . . . .<sup>3</sup>

Some East Tennessee Unionists were converted and joined with the rest of the state; others, including Brownlow, Horace Maynard, Johnson, and their friends steadfastly refused and aggressively championed the cause of the Union. A large segment of the population, however, at first sought to occupy a neutral position, as has been discussed earlier in another chapter.\*<sup>4</sup>

In May, 1861, Johnson and Maynard urged Lincoln to send a military force into East Tennessee, and Johnson also pleaded with Washington legislators to send aid. Two months later the Reverend William Blount Carter, a Presbyterian minister living in Elizabethton, journeyed to Washington to consult with General George B. McClellan, Lincoln, and others about the possibilities of sending troops immediately. There Carter became party to a daring plan. General George H. Thomas, in command of the Federal forces in Kentucky, was to dispatch troops to Knoxville, at which time a general Union uprising would be staged. Simultaneously, on the night of November 8, Carter and other Un-

\* Chapter 27.



ionists were to burn nine key railroad bridges between Bridgeport, Alabama, and Virginia.\*<sup>5</sup>

Carter and his associates performed their part of the agreement by destroying five of the bridges, but the Washington authorities did not deliver on their part of the bargain. Unknown to Carter and his cohorts, and against the wishes



*Fayetteville—Court House, Lincoln County*

of the President, General Buell, who had been assigned the task of entering East Tennessee with troops, had decided to hold his men in readiness to strike at Nashville rather than cross the Cumberland Mountains. Consequently, the eastern Union group was now without defense against the wrath of the Tennessee Confederates, whose spirit of conciliation was consumed in the fires of the bridges.<sup>6</sup>

Stern measures now were demanded. The editor of the Nashville *Union and American* urged that East Tennesseans be treated with “stern, vigorous, and unrelenting severity”; to him they were people who “could not appreciate magnanimity and leniency.” General Zollicoffer agreed, and expressed regret

\* E. Merton Coulter states that, “If the idea [of bridge burning] did not originate with Parson Brownlow, it was at least first prominently set forth by him.” Coulter, *Brownlow*, 168. Carter was paid \$20,000 by the Federal government for his role in the destruction of the bridges. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 60n.

that he had been hitherto so lenient in his treatment of the Unionists. "They have acted with base duplicity and should no longer be trusted," the General wrote; he then imposed martial law and suspended the right of habeas corpus in some areas under his command. Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin ordered all bridge-burners hanged, and became impatient with Confederate authorities in Knoxville who hesitated long enough to telegraph President Davis for permission. "The law does not require any approval by the President," Benjamin curtly replied when informed of the message, "but he entirely approves my order to hang every bridge-burner you can catch and convict." Without delay Confederate authorities then proceeded to capture and hang as many of the arsonists as could be found. Some escaped, however, and Carter, ironically, was among them.<sup>7</sup>

Reprisals against East Tennessee Unionists now became common practice. Hundreds of men, many of them prominent in public affairs, were hustled off to Confederate prisons. Others were drafted into the Confederate service, but soon were found untrustworthy. General E. Kirby Smith reported that many of them could not be relied upon for picket duty; even some who accepted commissions were suspected of being disloyal. Thousands of others escaped to Kentucky and elsewhere, and joined the Federal army.<sup>8</sup>

East Tennesseans were not entirely to blame for the evil days which befell them after the bridge-burning episode. They had acted in good faith and had every reason to believe the Federal government would do likewise. Some became bitter. J. H. Jordan wrote Andrew Johnson in denunciation of "the Government" for its wanton "neglect of duty," and L. C. Houk wrote that "the government is either a failure, or it cares nothing for the East Tennesseans." The Washington authorities, however, were not entirely to blame either. As mentioned, Lincoln clearly and earnestly desired immediate intervention. The task had been placed in the hands of General Buell, who decided to secure Middle Tennessee firmly in Federal hands before launching into the eastern section. The inaccessibility of East Tennessee, because of the Cumberland Mountains, was no doubt a factor in Buell's decision.\* Furthermore, the General knew that the area had been stripped of provisions and that "it would take 3,000 wagons constantly going to supply the army" before it could be occupied and held. Then, too, until Middle Tennessee was secured a position in East Tennessee would be a precarious one indeed. Unfortunately for the

\* The final decision was left to Buell. General McClellan wrote to him on December 29, 1861, as follows: "Johnson, Maynard, etc., are again becoming frantic and have President Lincoln's sympathy excited. Political considerations would make it advisable to get arms and troops into Eastern Tennessee at a very early day; you are, however, the best judge." O.R., Ser. II, Vol. I, 899. Buell, in separate communications to General McClellan, Lincoln, Johnson, and Maynard, wrote of his interest in "our loyal friends of East Tennessee" and of his intention to relieve them at the first opportune time. *Ibid.*, 898-900.

beleaguered Unionists of the east, their section was to remain in the hands of the Confederates for nearly two more years.<sup>9</sup>

During that time disorder and violence reigned, as Confederate and Unionist neighbors staged their own civil war. Secessionists were determined to hold the region at all costs, but their actions brought only defiance from their enemies, who organized "bushwhacking societies" and shot Confederates from ambush and destroyed their property. With the introduction of martial law the Unionists were silenced, but many went into hiding to await the day of deliverance. The Reverend Thomas W. Humes, living in East Tennessee at the time, observed family differences. He wrote:

Alienations of close kinsmen and ruptures of friendly relations, were widened and deepened. Other swords there are besides those of steel, wielded in civil wars. Quite as sharp and effective are they in wounding feelings and cutting through social ties . . . .<sup>10</sup>

General Burnside's invasion in the autumn of 1863 restored the Unionists to control in East Tennessee, but it did not bring peace.\* It was the Confederates' turn now to engage in underground work, and they did it with the zeal and efficiency which had characterized the Unionists' activity. One observer wrote that,

The worst elements of society were now aroused. . . . Old family feuds broke out afresh, and the land was full of murders and robbery. Bands of the worst men . . . scoured the country by night, calling quiet old farmers to their doors and shooting them in cold blood . . . . It was the reign of terror—war at every man's door, neighbor against neighbor. Neither property or life was safe by day or night.<sup>11</sup>

Unionist refugees now returned to the state eager to regain their property and to wreak vengeance upon their former oppressors. Many returned with a spirit of intense hatred of the Confederates, but perhaps none exceeded Parson Brownlow in their determination for revenge. Confederate authorities had silenced his vituperative newspaper soon after the bridge-burning episode and had committed him to prison for a brief period, where, according to his own

\* When Longstreet finally retreated from Knoxville in early December, President Lincoln called upon loyal people across the nation to "assemble at their places of worship and . . . [thank] God for the great advancement of the national cause." East Tennessee apparently had rested heavily upon the President's heart, and joyfully he saw the area again safely in the hands of the Unionists. John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (9 vols., New York, 1890), VIII, 187.



testimony, he was grossly mistreated.\* He had been released two months later and sent through the lines to the North after he had offered to Secretary of War Benjamin to "do for your Confederacy more than the Devil has ever done . . .—quit the country." He became very popular in Northern cities as a lecturer, and he sang his song of hatred wherever he could collect an audience. The Northern people heard him gladly, and he was reported to have received large sums of money for his harangues against the Confederacy.<sup>12</sup>

Brownlow rode into Knoxville on the heels of Burnside's army and made immediate plans to reestablish his newspaper. A printing press had been seized by Federals in Alexandria some time earlier and was placed at his disposal. So important to the molding of Union sentiment did Washington authorities believe Brownlow's paper to be that they gave him \$1,500 and dispatched five army wagons to Cincinnati to provide him with paper and other materials. The first issue appeared on November 11, 1863, under the elaborate title of *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig and Rebel Ventilator*. The pent-up hatred and vengeance of two years had stagnated in Brownlow's mind, but now their malignant poison had found a channel of relief. His first demand, repeated again and again in succeeding issues, was to exterminate the Rebels.

The Federal Government has been too lenient, and too slow to punish rebels [he wrote], and to crush out this most abominable, wicked, and uncalled for rebellion from its very commencement. The mediation we shall advocate is that of the *cannon* and the *sword*, and our motto is—no armistice on land or sea until *all*, ALL the rebels, both front and rear, in arms and in ambush, are subjugated or exterminated.<sup>13</sup>

Like Andrew Johnson, Brownlow harbored an especial grudge against the "rebel aristocrats" of the state, and he thought they should be driven out. He believed them to be low in morals, and he resented their "consciousness of superiority . . . founded alone upon the nigger," and their "insolence." Six weeks before Lee's surrender at Appomattox Brownlow announced his own reconstruction plan for East Tennessee rebels: "Impoverish the villains—take all they have—give their effects to the Union men they have crippled and imprisoned—and let them have their 'Southern Rights.'"<sup>14</sup>

\* Brownlow had been arrested on a warrant issued by John Crozier Ramsey, a personal and political enemy of the Parson, and a Confederate attorney general. Brownlow had been in hiding, but he voluntarily agreed to come to Knoxville for a discussion with General Crittenden, who promised him military protection. His arrest gave color to the suspicion that he had been betrayed and entrapped, and his son and a host of Unionists were prepared to make capital out of the allegation. Secretary of War Benjamin, in advising Ramsey to enter a *nolle prosequi* and drop the charges, stated: "General Crittenden feels sensitive on this point and I share his feelings. Better that even the most dangerous enemy however criminal should escape than that the honor and good faith of the Government should be impugned or even suspected." O.R., Ser. II, Vol. I, 917.



*Pulaski—Giles County Court House*

Brownlow's authority went unquestioned in East Tennessee, and he became that section's journalistic lord and its economic dictator. His prowess in economic matters was possible because of his appointment, made earlier, as United States treasury agent in East Tennessee. Sales and purchases must be cleared through him, and he made certain that no Rebel was allowed to engage in commercial activity of any kind. Even though one "may take all the oaths prescribed by the President, by Congress, by the military, and by Governor Johnson," still nothing, Brownlow held, could transform a Rebel into a Union man. In his capacity as treasury agent Brownlow also was custodian of lands and plantations abandoned by Confederates. His polluting grasp spread from the eastern section over the entire state of Tennessee when in March, 1865, he was elected governor.<sup>15</sup>

*Federal Occupation of Middle and West Tennessee*—In the meantime events of a stirring nature were transpiring in the other two sections of the state. Governor Harris had anticipated the fall of Fort Donelson and had secured

authorization from the state legislature to change the seat of government by proclamation in case the capture of Nashville appeared imminent. General Forrest on February 18 carried to Nashville official word of the fall of Fort Donelson, and on February 23 the legislature adjourned to convene again in Memphis, which Harris now proclaimed to be the capital. After conferring broad powers upon the governor, the general assembly adjourned *sine die* on March 20, and Harris and other officials soon fled to the safety of the Confederate lines in Mississippi. Such was necessary in view of the approaching Federal armies, and Grant had proclaimed West Tennessee to be under martial law a month earlier.<sup>16</sup>

President Lincoln immediately determined upon a bold course. Instead of leaving Tennessee in charge of the military authorities, he appointed Andrew Johnson military governor of the state. A member of the Senate when Tennessee seceded, Johnson had refused to go with the state into the Confederacy and had retained his seat in Congress. He, like Lincoln, contended that the seceded states were not legally out of the Union and that the loyal element in Tennessee should have the opportunity of reestablishing a satisfactory government. Johnson was given broad powers, including that of suspending the writ of habeas corpus. He was to hold office "during the pleasure of the President," or until "the loyal inhabitants" organized a civil government "in conformity with the Constitution of the United States."<sup>17</sup>

As an able administrator Johnson had proved himself, and as a strong Union man and master of vituperation against Southern "aristocrats" he was soon to demonstrate that he had few peers. His strong Union sentiments expressed when the first Southern states seceded had left no one in doubt as to his stand on disunion.\* Long years of deprivation had caused the milk of human kindness in his nature to sour, and he hated with a passion holders of "unearned" wealth and privilege. Although at one time a slaveowner and later a supporter of the Southern Democrats in 1860, he now took pride in denouncing the slavocracy and in defending with renewed vigor the rights of the "laboring man."\*\*\* Johnson also had the qualities of the demagogue\*\*\* and the tyrant,

\* Urged on by applause from the galleries, Johnson told the Senators on March 2, 1861: "I would have them [the Southern secessionists] arrested; and, if convicted, within the meaning and scope of the Constitution, by the eternal God, I would execute them . . . ." Later, in another speech he said: ". . . if . . . it is necessary to cleanse and purify that banner [the American flag], I say let it be baptized in fire . . . and bathed in a nation's blood!" *Congressional Globe*, 36 Cong., 2d sess., 1354; 37 Cong., 1st sess., 288-97.

\*\* Johnson had defined "the laboring classes" as "those who earn their bread by the sweat of their face, and not by fatiguing their ingenuity." "If Johnson were a snake," well-born Governor Harris once observed, "he would lie in the grass to bite the heels of rich men's children." Hall, *Andrew Johnson, Military Governor*, 22.

\*\*\* He once referred to "Mr. [Judah P.] Benjamin of Louisiana," a Jew, as one "who



and he did not hesitate to employ them during his three-year tenure as military governor.<sup>18</sup>

Objections to Johnson's appointment came from a wide area. The people of Middle and West Tennessee now looked upon him as a traitor, and they viewed his appointment as military governor with disdain. They recalled that in Johnson's two gubernatorial contests, 1853 and 1855, he had failed to win East Tennessee; the central section had provided the small but necessary margin for victory. East Tennesseans now softened in their attitude toward him, but outbursts of vindictive disapproval came from people in the other divisions. Immediately after his appointment Johnson began to receive hundreds of insulting and threatening letters. One anonymous correspondent, for example, blatantly advised him that every "dog has his day and . . . you will have yours . . . . We are preparing a knise coat of feathers for that orcation, so when we have the chanse We will turn your black skin read, and then andy your black friends will not know you." Others informed him of guerilla bands which planned to intercept his train and seize him as he journeyed from Washington to Nashville. Both friends and enemies wrote of rumored plans to kidnap him. Republican leaders thought the appointment ill-advised, and informed Lincoln of their fears. Assistant Secretary of War Thomas A. Scott, in Nashville at the time, telegraphed Washington authorities that Johnson would do more harm than good. Scott believed that sentiment in the state would be so strong against the East Tennessean that "attempts might be made to destroy his life," and that the cause of the Union might be served best by appointing "some reliable . . . [person]—such as General [William B.] Campbell . . . ." General Buell advised General McClellan that such a provisional government as Washington authorities envisaged would be "injudicious."<sup>19</sup>

If Johnson had any misgivings about the situation he did not show them. He assumed the position with the aggressiveness which characterized his nature. He arrived in Nashville on March 12, and six days later issued a message which he entitled, "An Address to the People." With a conciliatory tone he explained the purpose of the military government to be only that of aiding in the prompt restoration of the state to its rightful place in the Union. He had only contempt for "intelligent and conscious treason in high places," but he offered complete amnesty to "the erring and misguided" if they renounced their disloyalty and again embraced the Union.<sup>20</sup>

He firmly believed that the majority of the people were loyal at heart but had only been misled by the duplicity of Governor Harris and other secessionists. He believed that if the prominent Confederate leaders of the state were silenced the great masses would take the oath of allegiance without hesitation. To this end he began a harsh reign unequalled in the annals of Tennessee history to

belongs to that tribe that parted the garments of our Savior and for his vesture cast lots . . . . *Congressional Globe*, 37 Cong., 1st sess., 295.

that time. Public officials, newspaper editors, school teachers, and ministers of the gospel became the object of his vengeance. When Nashville Mayor Richard B. Cheatham and the city council refused to take the oath, Johnson turned them out of office and arbitrarily appointed Union men in their places. Cheatham was incarcerated in the penitentiary, and former Governor Neill S. Brown, Judge Joseph Guild, and various public officials summarily were arrested. He suppressed the *Daily Times* and the *Republican Banner*, two secessionist papers in Nashville, and imprisoned the editor of the latter. The Governor closed the plants of the *Gazette* and the *Patriot*, as well as the Baptist and Methodist publishing houses, for alleged disloyalty. Several clergymen were jailed as a result of their alleged "Confederate sermons" which Johnson believed could be heard in nearly every church in Nashville.\* R. B. C. Howell, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and Dr. Collins D. Elliott, principal of the Nashville Female Academy, were among those arrested. When several of the clergymen, including Howell and Elliott, demanded that the Governor hear their case they were called to the capitol where Johnson, apparently under the influence of whiskey, turned on them with the "fury of an enraged tiger." According to the Reverend Howell, the Governor "told them that they were all traitors, and that as to Mr. Elliott he ought to be hung . . ." The "style and spirit of the Governor," Howell said, "resembled very much those of an angry overseer, speaking to a herd of grossly offending slaves." Howell, Elliott, and a half dozen others, apparently preferring a neutral ground, were embittered at the military governor's conduct and words, and now determined not to take the oath. Consequently, they felt the harsh hand of Johnson's retribution. His policy stirred the people to indignation and earned for him the sobriquet, "Johnson the tyrant," but he did not flinch from his avowed purposes.<sup>21</sup>

Johnson believed that if Union meetings could be staged throughout the state Unionists would rally to the cause. Grant's victory at Shiloh in April, 1862, gave a tremendous impetus to the Union sentiment and caused a return of stability and confidence among Union sympathizers. The Governor then encouraged Unionists to hold mass meetings in Nashville and in other towns wherever Union sentiment might be aroused. Former Governor William B. Campbell, who presided at the Nashville rally, together with William B. Stokes, already had met with the Governor to help him plan Tennessee's restoration. Unduly confident of a public shift to a loyal position, Johnson decided to test the Union sentiment at the polls. A contest for circuit judge was held May 22, but Johnson's candidate was defeated by Turner S. Foster, whose record of disloyalty was known far and wide. Johnson, downcast and disappointed, again played the role of the tyrant. He issued a commission to Foster, immediately

\* Johnson claimed that the preachers had "done more to poison and corrupt the female mind . . . than all others, in fact changing their entire character from that of women and ladies to fanatics and fiends."

had him arrested on a charge of disloyalty, and appointed the defeated opponent in his place. Foster's victory indicated that the people had not given up hope for a Confederate victory, and no doubt the frequent raids by Forrest and Morgan encouraged them.<sup>22</sup>

The failure of the native population to support Johnson's program and the activities of Forrest and Morgan threw the military government into panic and temporarily disrupted any further reconstruction measures. Johnson became embroiled in a series of quarrels with Generals Buell, Halleck, and Rosecrans, but with the support of Lincoln he was able to maintain his position.<sup>23</sup>

Although the Governor's previous experiments with popular sentiment had been discouraging, in December, 1862, he decided upon another election, this time in the ninth and tenth congressional districts of West Tennessee.\* The results of the contests, held as scheduled on December 29, again disappointed Johnson. Forrest's raid prevented the opening of the polls in some places, and pro-Southern sentiment ran high. Alvin Hawkins, candidate for Congress in the ninth district, and later to become governor of the state, fled in terror when his life was threatened, and the number of votes which he and the other candidates received constituted only a small percentage of the voting population.<sup>24</sup>

The immediate threat to Johnson's reign was removed early in January, 1863, when Bragg retreated from Murfreesboro. The Governor's position was made secure in the autumn of that year when, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Confederates withdrew southward from Chattanooga, and General Burnside freed East Tennessee. Johnson's rule, apparently, now would be disputed only by guerillas. The success of the Federal armies proved an invigorating tonic to the Union case.

Two elections, held in August, 1863, caused Johnson considerable embarrassment. Three months earlier Democrats, at the call of Isham G. Harris, convened at Winchester and selected Judge Robert L. Caruthers, of Lebanon, as their gubernatorial candidate. Accordingly, on August 4, the Confederates held an election and chose the Wilson Countian as governor, together with a full slate of Confederate congressmen. Caruthers made no attempt to assume office, but the congressional delegation made its way to Richmond and was seated. The other election was even more distasteful to Johnson. Although supporters of the East Tennessean had convened in Nashville on July 8 and requested the Governor to issue writs of election, Johnson refused on the ground that elections in the past had proven futile and that sufficient Union strength could

\* The decision was made largely because Lincoln determined to secure a reconstruction policy in the border states. The President's emancipation proclamation did not include Tennessee. Lincoln, like Johnson, argued that the seceded states had not been out of the Union and he desired that the people of Tennessee, in their sovereign capacity, should abolish slavery by their own voluntary act.



not be developed so long as East Tennessee was unredeemed and a Confederate army was in the state. A strong Union party headed by Emerson Etheridge of Dresden had arisen in opposition to Johnson, however, and its leaders proceeded to call an election for August 4. Etheridge, an avowed Union leader who detested Johnson and his Radical cohorts, determined to hold an election on the date set by the constitution and then declare his candidate to be the constitutionally appointed governor. After the election he claimed that his choice, General William B. Campbell, had been legally selected as governor, and he made a trip to Washington to urge the President to recognize Campbell. His plan was doomed to failure, however, and Johnson continued as governor. The episode indicated, however, a sharp division within the ranks of the Unionists.<sup>25</sup>

By December, 1863, Federal armies had achieved widespread successes, and Lincoln, consequently, issued his proclamation of amnesty and reconstruction. Presidential reconstruction was designed as an instrument whereby the nation's wounds could be healed as quickly and painlessly as possible. According to Lincoln, amnesty and pardon, with certain exceptions involving mainly high ranking civil and military officials, would be accorded all who took the oath of allegiance to the Federal government. When the number taking the oath equaled one-tenth the voting population of 1860 they should organize a government which would be recognized and accorded all the privileges and immunities the state had enjoyed before the war.<sup>26</sup>

Johnson, however, vengeful by nature and with patience exhausted by two years of futile attempts to win the people to his point of view, entertained little sympathy for Lincoln's policy of leniency. "The intelligent and influential leaders must suffer; the tall poppies must be struck down," he had told a group of followers a few months earlier. He assumed the position that Lincoln's oath might absolve a Confederate from treason; he demanded that a more stringent oath should be required of those who expected to receive the elective franchise. On January 21 he told a Union audience assembled in the capitol that he wanted "a hard oath—a tight oath . . . ." Accordingly, a few days later when he issued a proclamation calling for an election of county officers on March 5, he prescribed the following oath, later referred to by ex-Confederates as Johnson's "Damnesty oath":

I solemnly swear that I will henceforth support the Constitution of the United States, and defend it against the assaults of all its enemies; that I am an active friend of the government of the United States, and the enemy of the so-called Confederate States; that I ardently desire the suppression of the present rebellion against the government of the United States; that I sincerely rejoice in the triumph of the armies and navies of the United States, and in the defeat and overthrow of the armies,

navies, and of all armed combinations of the so-called Confederate States; that I will cordially oppose all armistices or negotiations for peace with rebels in arms, until the Constitution of the United States, and all laws and proclamations made in pursuance thereof shall be established over all the people of every State and Territory embraced within the national Union; and that I will heartily aid and assist the loyal people in whatever measures may be adopted for the attainment of those ends; and further, that I take this oath freely and voluntarily and without mental reservation. So help me God.<sup>27</sup>

For the majority of Tennesseans, including a considerable body of conservative Unionists, Johnson's latest display of overbearing egotism and stubborn determination to carry out his plans without variation or concession was the last straw. Groups in Memphis and Nashville condemned the oath and others in Middle and West Tennessee worked secretly to destroy his influence and to undermine his power. The election of March 5 proved to be, as one paper predicted, "a farce." In some counties no contest was held, in others Unionists stuffed the ballot boxes, and in East Tennessee Unionists refused to vote because of their alleged humiliation at having to take any kind of an oath to vote. Johnson's prestige suffered a serious decline, but it seemed only to make the Governor more resolute in his determination to force his plan upon the people. In his messages to Lincoln he expressed only confidence, and through his propaganda organ, the *Nashville Times and Union*, he continued to pour vituperation upon the heads of his enemies. His failure to impress the conservative Unionists and the not infrequent Confederate raids into Tennessee, however, checked temporarily his reconstruction plans.<sup>28</sup>

Johnson believed that his prestige would rise considerably if Tennessee could send delegates to the Republican convention—called the National Union convention by Republicans—at Baltimore. Accordingly, delegates were selected and were seated. Lincoln's desire to placate the Radical Republicans and to present a slate which could defeat the rising Democratic movement, gained for Johnson the vice presidential nomination. The selection added immensely to Johnson's prestige in Tennessee, and enabled him to regain that which he had lost earlier.

The Lincoln-Johnson ticket was supported by only a small majority of Tennesseans, and was opposed by both the secessionists and the Union Peace party, the latter consisting of loyal Unionists not of the Johnson persuasion and who favored a cessation of hostilities. The secessionists, though large in number, were no great problem because they could be excluded by Johnson's test oath. Members of the Union Peace party presented more formidable opposition. This group included such prominent Unionists as Emerson Etheridge, Thomas A. R. Nelson, General William B. Campbell, and former Nashville postmaster John

Lellyett; Etheridge was developing rapidly into an outstanding conservative leader who could oppose Brownlow in the gubernatorial contest of 1867. They supported General George B. McClellan, commander in chief of the Federal forces in 1862, who had received the Democratic nomination on a platform declaring that "justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities." They had attended the "Convention of Loyal Men," held September 5 in Nashville to reorganize civil government and to prepare for the presidential election in November, but they had been rebuffed by Radical Republicans such as Horace Maynard, L. C. Houk, and other Johnson stalwarts.<sup>29</sup>

When both the secessionists and the Union Peace groups realized that they would be excluded from the polls in the election of 1864, they were outraged and dispatched forthwith to Washington a deputation of McClellan electors to present a written protest to the President. Lincoln, however, who had received less than forty per cent of the popular vote in 1860, was "running scared" (to use a current expression), and he believed that he could not risk the loss of a single state in 1864. He therefore dismissed the Tennessee group by praising Johnson and exclaiming, "I expect to let the friends of George B. McClellan manage their side of the contest in their own way, and I will manage my side of it in my way." Three of the delegates—Campbell, Lellyett, and Balie Peyton—closed the incident with a written rejoinder to the President. They accused Lincoln of adopting "a doctrine of despotism"; accused him of supporting a program in Tennessee "devised to overturn the Constitution" which was as nefarious as "the Southern rebellion"; and assured him that no election contrary to the wishes of Johnson could be held in Tennessee. After this, little enthusiasm for McClellan was shown in the state, especially after armed forces broke up a McClellan meeting in October.<sup>30</sup>

Violence flared not infrequently at the Lincoln-Johnson rallies. On the night of October 24, for example, "shots were freely fired" during a Nashville rally, which consisted mainly of Negroes. Johnson addressed the gathering, and once again declared war on the "Tennessee aristocrats." Bluntly exhibiting the qualities of the demagogue, he declared that the estates of the rich should be seized and divided among free farmers, and that the "great planters [who] sneer at Negro equality" should be humbled. When the blacks claimed Johnson as their "Moses," the Governor replied: "Well then, humble and unworthy as I am, if no better shall be found, I will indeed be your Moses, and lead you through the Red Sea of war and bondage to a fairer future of liberty and peace."<sup>31</sup>

The election on November 8 was a farce, since the results were already determined. Only a few scattered votes were cast for McClellan. Congress, however, rejected Tennessee's electoral votes on the ground that the state was in rebellion, and thus decided that no valid election had been held.<sup>32</sup>



Unionists, encouraged by the results of the election, made plans for reconstruction in accordance with Johnson's wishes. Their efforts were interrupted temporarily by General Breckinridge's abortive assault in East Tennessee which sent thousands of Unionists scurrying to Chattanooga and Nashville, and by Hood's unsuccessful raid on Franklin and Nashville. Hood's defeat in mid-December gave Unionists the opportunity to make serious plans for a convention.<sup>33</sup>

Heeding a call for an assembly in Nashville on January 9, five hundred Unionists assembled and arrogated to themselves the power to amend the Constitution. They proposed to submit to "the people" on February 22 a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery and a schedule accompanying the amendment which dealt with a variety of matters. The schedule repudiated the ordinance of secession and the military league with the Confederacy; declared null and void all acts of the state government since May 6, 1861; ratified Johnson's appointments to civil and military office; gave to the first legislature which assembled under the revised constitution the power to determine the qualifications of voters; and provided for the election on March 4, 1865, of a governor and members of the general assembly. As a final act, they nominated for governor William G. Brownlow—a man who in 1861 could not interest even the East Tennessee Unionists in his candidacy, but who now appeared as a hero and a martyr to the cause of Tennessee Unionism. The amendment and schedule were adopted on February 22 by a vote of 25,293 to 48. The small turn-out disappointed the Radicals, but the election served its purpose. Johnson's work now appeared to be accomplished, and he must have departed for Washington to take the oath on March 4 as Vice President with some feeling of pride.<sup>34</sup>

Johnson was a controversial figure throughout his stay in the military governor's chair. That he was sincere and earnest few questioned, but his prejudices and personal dislikes, never concealed, often were so violent and biased that he drove otherwise loyal people into the camps of rebellion. His use of intoxicants,\* his lack of the qualities of gentleness, broad sympathy, and deep understanding of humanity—which characterized Lincoln—and his coarse, domineering intolerance, drove many people from him. Johnson has been criticized for arbitrarily delaying reconstruction in the state, for employing methods which were "arbitrary, unconstitutional, and permanently injurious," and for excluding by his iron-clad oath many unquestionably loyal men from participating in reconstruction and thus "destroying their interest in the work, humiliating and aggrieving them, and losing their counsel, influence and cooperation." A more gentle and refined person could have won, for example, the confidence of the Nashville clergymen; they were repulsed, however, by Johnson's "violent

\* Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana, who visited Johnson in Nashville in 1863, reported that the Governor opened their first interview by producing a bottle of whiskey and was addicted to taking "more than most gentlemen would have done." Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 106.

and vituperative language and conduct." O. P. Temple, a contemporary of the military governor, strongly believed that Johnson purposely and unnecessarily delayed reconstruction for his own self aggrandizement and political gain. Clifton J. Hall, however, writing fifty years later, determined that at no time prior to the end of December, 1864, was "a fair, dignified, and representative election possible," and that reconstruction could not have been accomplished earlier. There were no precedents for Johnson to follow, and he, often without the advice and friendship even of the Federal military authorities, had to make the rules as he went along. Unquestionably he made mistakes, but fearlessly and unsparingly he gave of what he had for the Union cause in Tennessee. He was loyal, self-sacrificing, and steadfastly devoted to a cause that he believed was just.<sup>35</sup>

*Conditions at Home*—Destruction followed in the wake of the marching armies, and the people on the home front suffered many hardships and deprivations. Some communities were like Holly Hill, Arkansas, near Memphis, where by 1863 "two thousand old men, women, and children had been reduced to poverty," and where "not a store [was] left in town, [and] not a fenced field in the surrounding country." Mothers in solemn resignation watched their sons march away, and many had four or more in the service. A distraught mother who, after three years of war had lost on the field of battle three of her four sons, sacrificially said to General Polk, "As soon as I can get a few things together, General, you shall have Harry, too." Mark Cockrill and Doctor James G. M. Ramsey were among those who suffered enormous property losses. Cockrill, who had won world renown during the previous decade as a farmer and wool producer, watched Federal soldiers take from his Davidson County farm 20,000 bushels of corn, twenty-six horses, sixty head of Durham cattle, 220 sheep, 200 tons of hay, 2,000 bushels of oats, and 2,000 pounds of bacon. Furthermore, General James Negley assessed him a "loan" of \$1,000. Doctor Ramsey, of East Tennessee, suffered untold losses, including the burning of his spacious home at the confluence of the Holston and French Broad rivers.\*<sup>36</sup>

\* Ramsey later wrote of his losses: "I had the honor of a correspondence with the elite and distinguished . . . —with A. Jackson, Calhoun, Polk, . . . and Democratic leaders and editors everywhere. Beside my private correspondence, copies of my addresses, essays, contributions to the literary, political, secular, and religious journals of my times. All my historical and antiquarian manuscripts—some of them containing the substance of my second volume of the History of Tennessee: vis. from 1800 to the end of Polk's administration—unpublished biographies of the leading master spirits of their day in Tennessee and elsewhere, all these being in my office and study adjoining my dwelling house fell victims to the flames . . . . My library—medical, miscellaneous, . . . historical and literary, I had for many years been collecting from Europe and America, and which was, I believe, the best in the western states—was stolen, destroyed, or burned." Hesseltine (ed.), *Ramsey, Autobiography and Letters*, 55-56.

Details of the hardships and sufferings may best be learned from the diaries and letters of the period, albeit some no doubt gave exaggerated accounts. Typical is the diary of Bettie Ridley Blackmore, daughter of Chancellor Bromfield Lewis Ridley of Rutherford County, who wrote a detailed account of the hardships of her family after the fall of Fort Donelson. Her husband and four brothers served the Confederacy, and she lived with her parents and ailing grandmother at "Fairmont," her father's country estate on Stones River. When Bragg retreated, the family found itself "surrounded by a desperate, insolent, unscrupulous, but victorious foe," and her father, his life in jeopardy, fled.

Crowds of insolent Yankees [she wrote] came daily to our house for forage, chickens, horses, meat and everything else they chose to demand . . . they were coarse, vulgar, and insolent, and invariably reproached Ma with the fact that her Sons were in the Rebel Army . . . Ma buried our Silver in 2 boxes, . . . but, in a short time, we discovered that one box had been stolen . . . Wheat, corn, 50 hams, lard, dried fruit, wool . . . [were] concealed in the roof of the house . . . Almost every night we were aroused by the servants to witness the burning of some house or cotton Gin. In 4 weeks 17 Gins and several dwelling houses had been burned by the Federals in a circle of seven miles.

The Federals threatened on several occasions to burn "Fairmont," and on the night of February 11, they applied the torch to the mansion. Mrs. Blackmore described the morning after the fire:

The morning dawned in clouds—the rain was pouring down; . . . Yankee soldiers were coming in crowds *demanding* breakfast when they knew and saw that almost every thing was gone, and exulted in words and laughter over their work of destruction. Neighbors came flocking in now, to offer us homes and comfort. Poor Ma, weary and wretched was in a state of bold and haughty defiance. She hurled every insult the cowardly dogs gave in their teeth and told them in no measured terms of their *base cowardice* in burning a house with no occupants but four defenseless women . . . All—all was gone: the old cradle by which . . . [Ma] had sat so many hours and sung lullabys to her darlings—the little arm chair—the little rocker—a small pillow sacred to her because her baby boy had died upon it—the family Bible with its well filled record . . . Pa's library of books, wheat, corn, lard, bacon and indeed almost everything to eat—all gone.

Of Rosecrans' depredations in Murfreesboro, she wrote:

Wagon loads of furniture were taken from the houses of the most costly description—even pianos, and sent to Nashville . . . Rosey, too,





(Courtesy Stephen Rice Phelan)

### *Memphis—Old Phelan Home*

*Yesterday—During the War Between the States, when it was used as a Soldiers Home by the Union Army, an artist with the Army drew a complete picture of the historical Memphis home. The Picture is from the report of the "Western Sanitary Commission" published in St. Louis, 1864.*

is a devout Catholic! Nothing but the mercy and forgiveness of God can wipe out his sins.<sup>37</sup>

Shortages of food and manpower became acute throughout the state by early 1863. Both men and women frequently smuggled food and medicines through the lines. One Nashville woman, affecting great sorrow, carried a coffin packed with valuables, and many others, concealed under their flowing skirts and spacious bustles coffee, quinine, sewing thread, and even bolts of cloth and boots. Colonel William Truesdail, who headed the Federal secret police in Nashville, suspected every member of the Southern Ladies Aid Society (probably on good grounds) of smuggling quinine and other drugs to the Confederates. "Don't trust [Confederate] women," he ordered his underlings. Coffee became



(Courtesy Stephen Rice Phelan)

*Memphis—Old Phelan Home*

*Today—The surrounding scene has changed, but the Old Phelan Mansion still stands today in all its austere dignity and fine architecture.*

a very scarce item, and increased in cost 700 per cent in some areas. A variety of substitutes, including parched sweet potatoes, peanuts, rye, corn, English peas, and okra, came into use. Sugar also was scarce, and both sorghum molasses and honey were used widely as sweetening. Sugar increased 600 per cent in cost, and the price of salt increased 1400 per cent in many places. Rural people generally fared better than the urban dwellers, but by 1864 many people over the state were in dire need of the necessities.<sup>38</sup>

Shortages of manpower had a telling effect. By 1863 most of the men were in uniform, and many slaves refused to work. On one Middle Tennessee plantation "the crop [in 1863] was very small . . . [and] part of the corn was never ploughed but once . . . . Fences are all neglected, in short everything fast going to destruction . . . ." Military authorities followed the practice of giving furloughs at planting and harvest time, which no doubt kept many civilians from starving. Negroes unfortunately defined their Yankee deliverer's



"freedom" as meaning freedom from work. Mrs. Blackmore described those in Middle Tennessee in September, 1863:

The poor creatures flock by hundreds & thousands to the Yankees for freedom & submit to the worst slavery they ever had. Rutherford [County] has lost nearly all her able bodied negroes.

And in November, 1863:

Ma's negroes are growing more and more unruly. They are not only indolent & perfectly trifling in every way, but, are very insolent & disobedient. They steal anything they can and sell it—they quarrel terribly among themselves & each seems determined to use or *waste* every thing on the plantation to prevent the other from having more than they have . . . . Oh! these wretched—wicked Yankees!<sup>39</sup>

The women of Tennessee, however, many of whom had not worked except in the home before the war, now put their hands to the plow. Many who before the war would have turned faint at the sight of blood and firearms, now protected their homes with whatever weapons were available and ministered to the sick and wounded in makeshift hospitals or wherever they found them. Linnie Hutchinson, a Shelby County girl, frightened one hundred Federal soldiers from her property when, raising her gun in a threatening manner, she vowed she would kill the next man who fired into her flock of chickens. Marina Gunter of Putnam County, upon finding three bushwhackers torturing her father, slew two of them with an axe and put the third to flight after breaking his arm. Many women in West Tennessee served as volunteer nurses in the Southern Mothers' Society Hospital in Memphis, which had been established to care for wounded Confederates. Ella King Newsome, trained in the Memphis City Hospital (which was operated very efficiently during the war by the Sisters of St. Dominic), helped establish hospitals throughout Tennessee and the South. Affectionately called "The Florence Nightingale of the Southern Army," she ministered to soldiers in Kentucky at the beginning of the war but soon went to Nashville where she organized a hospital in the buildings of the Howard High School. After General Buell's invasion she moved her patients to Winchester where she converted a home into a haven of mercy. She also supervised the organization of a hospital in Chattanooga, and in other Southern cities.<sup>40</sup>

While the majority of the women were highly loyal to the Southern cause, some did "fraternize" with the enemy. The egotistical William Blount Carter wrote from Kingston that "women weep for joy when I merely hint" that Federal troops soon would occupy their town. Generals Buell, Sherman, and other Federal officers were entertained graciously by many of the aristocracy, including Sarah Childress Polk, widow of the President. "He visited Mrs. McLean, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Mattell, Annie Parks and Sarah Andrews and the Hughes as



a matter of course," wrote one Columbia resident of the hospitality extended a Federal officer in Maury County. The majority of Tennessee women, however, remained loyal to the cause for which their husbands and brothers fought, and expressed contempt for those who did not. One woman wrote that she would "blush" at the thought of her "own relations" at home "enjoying themselves under Lincoln's rule" while their husbands and brothers fought for Southern independence. A Nashville woman disdainfully wrote to her brother in the service of the conduct of some of her female friends:

You will be surprised to hear that your friends of the female denomination are dropping off every day—yes, dropping off—as willing victims into the arms of the ruthless invaders. Just think of it! Mollie the unconquerable, who used to parade with a large Beauregard breastpin, and who sang 'Maryland, My Maryland' with so much pathos, was married some four months ago to a Federal with one bar on his shoulder. Sallie, who used to sleep with the 'Bonnie Blue Flag' under her pillow . . ., is married to one with two bars, and so on.

Women of color were a novelty to the Yankees, and proved to be boon companions. One Federal soldier stationed at Memphis wrote in high praise of the Negro women there: they "felt loving towards us because they thought we were bringing them freedom, and they wouldn't charge us a cent." John N. Williams, of the Seventh Tennessee Regiment, indicated in his diary on February 23, 1863, however, that some of the Tennessee blacks were unwilling where Yankees were concerned:

Heard from home today[.] the Yankees has been through there[.] . . . Seems to be their object [to] commit rape on every negro woman they can find[.] Some time half a company would commit the Same with the Same woman[.]<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps the people of East Tennessee suffered greater hardships and deprivations than did those in the rest of the state. They had their own peculiar civil war, as Unionist and Confederate neighbors renewed old feuds or manufactured new ones. N. G. Taylor, who in 1864 appealed to Congress for aid, wrote of his East Tennessee neighbors:

Their property has been seized, confiscated; their houses pillaged; their stock driven off; their grain consumed; their substance wasted; their fences burned; their fields laid waste; their farms destroyed by friends as well as foes . . . they gave up the last horse, mule, cow, sheep, hog, everything they had to the soldiers that neded [*sic*] them, because they were union soldiers, or were plundered out of them by the enemy . . . I have

heard of no single neighborhood within the bounds of East Tennessee, whose green sod has not drunk the blood of citizens murdered.

Frederic Collins and Lloyd P. Smith, commissioners of the "Pennsylvania Relief Association for East Tennessee," traveled through many of the eastern counties in 1864 and reported that crops had been destroyed and many homes had been burned. The people, they said, had been "imprisoned in great numbers, . . . murdered upon their own thresholds, or while following the plough . . ." A group of "Philadelphia ladies" heard in 1863 that many East Tennesseans "lived on a cracker a day"; touched with compassion for such unfortunate people, the ladies sent food and supplies.<sup>42</sup>

East Tennessee assumed a position in national sentiment similar to that which Belgium occupied in the first World War. J. T. Trowbridge's *Cudjo's Cave*, published in 1863, directed Northern attention to the needs of East Tennessee. In the following year several books, including one by Edmund Kirke (J. R. Gilmore) entitled *Down in Tennessee and Back by Way of Richmond*, were published which described the pathetic plight of a suffering people. Material aid did not bring peace, however. Confederate soldiers returning to their East Tennessee homes in 1864 and 1865 found themselves unwelcome. An "Old Soldier" at New Market posted a notice ordering "all damed [*sic*] rebels . . . to leave at wonce [*sic*]." All "theving [*sic*], Godforsaken, hell-deserving rebels" were given an especial invitation to depart. To the returning Confederates it appeared that "the bottom rails were on top" and that the "worst part of the Union element was uppermost." By the end of 1865 a wave of murders, whippings and threats had driven a substantial portion of the Confederates into more friendly surroundings.<sup>43</sup>

As mentioned above, city dwellers suffered more than did their rural neighbors. The Confederate defeat at Shiloh on April 7, 1862, left West Tennessee open to invasion, and by early July, Memphis, whose leading citizens the previous year had sought the location of the Confederate capital, had been occupied by Federal forces.\* Economic conditions grew steadily worse after that time,

\* Nashvillians and Chattanoogaans also sought to have their respective cities named the Confederate capital. E. Merton Coulter has observed that either location would have caused the Confederate government to attach greater significance to a defense of the west and would have made the enemy lines more vulnerable because of the necessity of maintaining longer supply lines. *The Confederate States of America* (Vol. VII of *A History of the South*, Baton Rouge, 1950), 101-02; Stanley F. Horn, "Nashville During the Civil War," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IV (March, 1945), 7. Knoxville also received consideration in 1862. John Williams and J. J. Craig advertised for sale in February, 1862, "100 valuable town lots" in Knoxville. "As Knoxville is favorably spoken of as the future Capitol [*sic*] of the Southern Confederacy," they stated, "the lots . . . will be . . . the most valuable investment in East Tennessee." Handbill in Kenneth Haws Scrapbook, University of Tennessee.

and the winter of 1862-1863 was indeed a hard one. Negroes deserted their masters, and prices of commodities soared. In February, 1863, the population was estimated at 11,000 original whites, 5,000 slaves, and 19,000 newcomers. The latter, according to the *New York World*, consisted of a "crowd of sharks, cormorants, sharpers, gamblers, speculators, and anxious relatives seeking for sick soldiers . . . The most mixed, assorted, and grotesque lot of mortals crowded together imaginable." Dead mules and horses lined the outskirts of the city, and "filth enough to poison the Mississippi from source to mouth" filled the streets.<sup>44</sup>

News of the fall of Fort Donelson threw Nashvillians in panic. Premature news of a Confederate victory had reached the capital city on February 15, and became the occasion of a noisy celebration. On the next day, however, came the terrifying news of surrender. Within an hour the roads leading out of Nashville became crowded with people—going they knew not where. The Reverend Collins D. Elliott, president of the Nashville Female Academy, made hasty preparations to spirit the young ladies to their homes before Federal troops reached the city. Many other Nashvillians made preparations just as hastily to rob and loot stores and shops. "I saw an old woman," one officer later testified, "apparently in an advanced state of decrepitude staggering under a load of meat that a quartermaster's mule could hardly carry." Prices soared. Within a few months sugar was quoted at forty cents a pound; butter, at one dollar a pound; potatoes, four dollars a bushel; and firewood, twelve dollars a cord. By Christmas, wood had advanced to thirty dollars, and other prices had climbed substantially. The editor of the *Daily Press* commented on May 3, 1864, that "the city is filled with thugs, highwaymen, robbers and assassins. Murder stalks throughout the city almost every night." Governor Johnson was not the only one in Nashville who drank whiskey. "More ardent spirits are consumed in Nashville than in Boston," the editor asserted. On August 4, 1864, a day which President Lincoln had ordered set aside for fasting and prayer, sixty persons went before the Recorder's court on charges of drunkenness. The effect upon many of the churches was nearly fatal. R. B. C. Howell painted a dismal picture of conditions at the First Baptist Church in 1863; not since the days of the initial onslaughts of Campbellism thirty years earlier had the church been in worse condition. Sunday School attendance declined to less than half what it was before the war, and collections in 1862 dropped to less than twenty per cent of those of the previous year. The Second Baptist Church was completely broken up. Similar examples might be given for the Presbyterians, Methodists, and others.<sup>45</sup>

The siege of Chattanooga disrupted all economic activity in that city, and the railroads were destroyed. Several industrial plants, recently established, moved into Alabama. The armies, coming and going, stripped the town and countryside to such an extent that after the winter of 1863-1864 hundreds of



people were in dire want. Prices rose considerably. Flannel shirts were quoted at \$4.50, "white ribbed drawers" at \$2.75, and socks at \$6.20 a dozen. A good grade of chewing tobacco sold for \$2.25 per pound, and meerscham pipes retailed at \$20.75; cosmetic soap was advertised at 60c per cake and razors cost \$1.50. As in the case of Memphis, the invasion by the Federal troops brought a host of "traders, adventurers, soldiers, poor whites, refugees, and negroes." With Sherman's invasion came the order that only "loyal people" should be allowed to remain in Chattanooga.<sup>46</sup>

In 1862 Brownlow, on an extensive speaking tour of the North, described Knoxville as a city of destitution. He told a Cincinnati audience: "In Knoxville there is not a bolt of bleached domestic or calico to be had, nor a spool of Coates's thread . . . Sewing-needles and pins are not to be had . . . It has been remarked on the streets of Knoxville that no such thing as a fine-toothed comb was to be had . . ." As in the other cities, prices soared. Board and room at the Franklin House increased twelve-fold. Flour was priced at \$20 per barrel, butter at \$1.00 per pound, corn meal at \$3.00 per bushel, and Irish potatoes at \$3.00 per bushel. By mid-summer, 1864, the town was overrun with newcomers, including many Negroes, who "manifested a strong inclination for town life." Efforts were made in vain to remove many of the "filthy and disreputable persons," especially women of ill repute.<sup>47</sup>

Knoxville had its quota of prostitutes, but the town ran a poor third to Nashville and Memphis on this count. With the invasion of the Federal armies came hundreds of lewd women, ranging from filthy slatterns who served their customers in back streets and alleys to sophisticated concubines whose customers maintained them in comparative luxury. Their number increased with each influx of troops. In 1863 the Nashville post commander, in desperation, rounded up 150 of the vilest ones and shipped them north; authorities in Louisville and Cincinnati refused to accept them, however, and returned them to Nashville by government steamer. Just after the Battle of Nashville two bold Rebel cavalymen, anxious to salvage something from Hood's disastrous defeat at the capital, captured two Nashville prostitutes, carried them to Franklin, and placed them under guard in a hotel. Yankee horsemen, however, intent upon losing none of the spoils of war, journeyed forthwith to the Williamson county seat, retook the whores, mounted them on a mule, and triumphantly returned to the state capital. In Memphis conditions were just as bad, if not worse. In 1863 the editor of the Memphis *Bulletin* complained that his city was "the great rendezvous for prostitutes and 'pimps,'" and an Ohio captain stationed in the city described Memphis as "one of the first places of female prostitution on the continent." When a street-walker could ply her vocation no longer in cities of the North, he wrote, the Yankees then "fitted [her] up in her best attire and shipped [her] to Memphis."<sup>48</sup>

Venereal disease followed in the wake of the scarlet women.\* In both Memphis and Nashville prostitutes were registered and periodically examined; if not found diseased they were issued certificates attesting to their freedom from infection. A hospital was established in Nashville for treatment of diseased women, and was maintained from examining fees received from the registered whores. Considerable progress was made in curtailing the ravages of the disease until November, 1863, when an influx of new Federal troops swelled the number of cases treated from a daily average of twelve to twenty-eight. In April of the same year the provost marshal of Memphis closed all bawdy houses in the river town and threatened with expulsion anyone who operated such an establishment in defiance of the order. Although some decline in activity ensued immediately after the command was issued, by autumn of 1863 many houses still were in operation and lewd women swarmed the streets.<sup>49</sup>

Tennessee indeed had been a major battlefield of the Civil War, and the civilians suffered wherever marching armies traveled. While their calamities are not to be compared with those of the people of South Carolina or northern Virginia, their sufferings had been intense. As one author has summarized, "Not since the Duke of Alva ravaged the Netherlands, or Cromwell . . . harried Ireland, had a civilized country so felt the brunt of invasion . . . . Tennessee property, by one reliable estimate, was reduced fifty per cent in taxable value . . . ." <sup>50</sup> The state also had been the subject of an experiment in government, headed by one whose temperament was not suited to such a task. Four years of bitterness in East Tennessee left old wounds which to this day have not been completely healed. Even then the Time of Troubles had not ended; the people of Tennessee were yet to suffer through four years of the Brownlow regime.

\* Appearing on the front page in a half-column of the *Nashville Daily Press and Times* on July 3, 1865, and for some time thereafter, was an advertisement which must have been welcomed news to many. The paper heralded "Samaritan's Gift," a new medicinal preparation developed by a University of Pennsylvania graduate student, as a "positive cure" for "ghonorrhoea [*sic*], syphilis, or [?] venereal diseases." It had been used "in the United States Hospitals, thus restoring to health many of our brave soldiers," the advertisement stated. Separate preparations were bottled for males and females; cures were guaranteed in two to four days, and "in some cases, twenty-four hours."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.—NOTES

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3. Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 130, 422-23; quotation from Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 561.
4. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 58.
5. T. Harry Williams, "Andrew Johnson as a Member of the Committee on the Conduct of the War," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 12 (1940), 73-74; *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 1 sess., 297; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 564-65; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 58-59; Georgia Lee Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill, 1934), 146; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 168 ff.; Walker, "Holding the Tennessee Line," 236-37.
6. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 61; O.R., Ser. I, Vol. IV, 231 ff.; *ibid.*, Vol. VII, 726.
7. *Union and American*, November 12, 1861; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 565; O.R., Ser. II, Vol. I, 843; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 172.
8. Tatum, *Disloyalty in the Confederacy*, 150; O.R., Ser. II, Vol. I, 884, 886; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 174; Parks, *Kirby Smith*, 155, 157-58.
9. Williams, "The Committee on the Conduct of the War," 73-74; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 176-77; O.R., Ser. II, Vol. I, 898-900.
10. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 63; *Nashville Union*, July 8, 1863; Humes, *Loyal Mountaineers*, 122; John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (9 vols., New York, 1890), VIII, 187.
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13. Coulter, *Brownlow*, 250-51; *Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, November 11, 1863.
14. Coulter, *Brownlow*, 251-52; *Whig and Rebel Ventilator*, February 20, 1864.
15. Coulter, *Brownlow*, 254.
16. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 29; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 570; Stryker, *Johnson*, 94; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 19.
17. *Cong. Globe*, 37 Cong., 1 sess., 295; Stryker, *Johnson*, 95-96.
18. Thomas B. Alexander, *Political Reconstruction in Tennessee* (Nashville, 1950), 15; *Cong. Globe*, 26 Cong., 2 sess., 1354; 37 Cong., 1 sess., 288-97; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 22.
19. O.R., Ser. I, Vol. X, pt. 2, p. 11; quote in Milton, *Age of Hate*, 108, and in Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 37-38; White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 374-75.
20. John Savage, *The Life and Public Services of Andrew Johnson* (New York, 1866), 250-51; Stryker, *Johnson*, 95.
21. Spain, "Howell, Nashville Baptist Leader," 335-36; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 35; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 44; *Nashville Union*, July 5, 1862; Milton, *Age of Hate*, 110; Harold M. Hyman, *Era of the Oath, Northern Loyalty Tests during the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Philadelphia, 1954), 39; J. E. Windrow, "Collins D. Elliott and the Nashville Female Academy," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, III (January, 1935), 78.
22. *Ibid.*, 110; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 36; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 46-47, 49.
23. *Ibid.*, 48-49, 51 ff.



24. *Ibid.*, 88, 90; *House Reports*, 37 Cong., 3 sess., No. 46, p. 3; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 38.
25. *Ibid.*, 41; Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 46; *Nashville Daily Union*, July 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, October 4, 1863; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 99-100.
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27. Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 102, 113, 118; *Nashville Union*, August 25, 1863; *House Reports*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., No. 30, p. 8; Eugene G. Feistman, "Radical Disfranchisement and the Restoration of Tennessee, 1865-1866," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XII (June, 1953), 136.
28. Dorris, *Pardon and Amnesty*, 50; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 44-45; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 124; *Nashville Union*, March 3, 1863.
29. *Nashville Times and Union*, September 8-9, 1864; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 140 ff.; quotation in Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 46.
30. *Ibid.*, 46-48; Dorris, *Pardon and Amnesty*, 52-53; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 149-51, 152-53, 154; Harriet Chappell Owsley, "Peace and the Presidential Election of 1864," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVIII (March, 1959), 17-18.
31. *Ibid.*, 154; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 48; Frank Moore, *Speeches of Andrew Johnson* (Boston, 1865), xxxvi ff., xli.
32. *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 2 sess., 534, 548, 711.
33. Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 157-59; *Nashville Dispatch*, January 10, 1865.
34. *Ibid.*, January 10-15, 1865; Hall, *Johnson, Military Governor*, 166, 170.
35. *Ibid.*, 216, 221; Temple, *Notable Men*, 411, 417-18; O.R., Ser. III, Vol. IV, 1221-22.
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37. Sarah Ridley Trimble (ed.), "Behind the Lines in Middle Tennessee, 1863-1865: The Journal of Bettie Ridley Blackmore," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XII (March, 1953), 49-50, 51-53, 63.
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40. Simkins and Patton, *Women of the Confederacy*, 48, 49, 86, 95; J. Fraise Richard, *The Florence Nightingale of the Southern Army* (New York, 1914), *passim*.
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44. Joseph H. Parks, "A Confederate Trade Center Under Federal Occupation: Memphis, 1862-1865," *Journal of Southern History*, VII (1941), 289-314; "Memphis Under Military Rule, 1862 to 1865," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 14 (1942), 54; Capers, *River Town*, 152 ff.; Coulter, *Confederate States of America*, 101-02.
45. Officer quoted in Crabb, "Twilight of Nashville Gods," 297, 300, 302; Horn, "Nashville During Civil War," 9; Mrs. Bennett D. Bell, "Female Schools in Tennessee Prior to 1861," *Confederate Veteran*, XXXII (April, 1924), 170; Spain, "R.B.C. Howell: Nashville Baptist Leader," 337-38.
46. Govan and Livingood, *Chattanooga Country*, 259, 260, 265; "Chattanooga Under Military Occupation, 1863-1865," *Journal of Southern History*, XVII (February, 1951), 32-33; Livingood, "Chattanooga, Tennessee: Its Economic History in the Years Immediately Following Appomattox," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 15 (1943), 37; Massey, *Ersatz in Confederacy*, 162.
47. *Parson Brownlow's Book*, 422-23; Simkins and Patton, *Women of the Confederacy*, 132-33; Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 142-43; Campbell, "East Tennessee During Federal Occupation," 71; Creekmore, *Knoxville*, 92-112.
48. *Nashville Dispatch*, July 8, 10, 26, 28, May 1, 1863, December 22, 1864; Wiley, *Life of Billy Yank*, 259, 260; Parks, "Memphis Under Military Rule," 53-55.
49. Wiley, *Life of Billy Yank*, 260, 262.
50. Davidson, *The Tennessee*, II, 108.

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## CHAPTER XXIX

### *Reconstruction*

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**A**LTHOUGH TENNESSEE CEASED to be a battlefield after December, 1864, a prolonged period of "neither peace nor war" ensued thereafter. Bitterness and confusion reigned. The sufferings of East Tennesseans, so pronounced during hostilities, became more intense with the return of the blue- and the gray-clad youths. Unionists and Confederates returned to a land of waste and barrenness. Middle Tennessee was "the womb of desolation," a Northern newspaperman wrote after touring the state, but West Tennessee offered little improvement. "Government mules and horses are occupying the homes . . . in which . . . [Tennessee's] chivalric sons so often slumbered," he observed.

Go from Memphis to Chattanooga, and it is like the march from Moscow in olden times, . . . [he wrote]. Whether you go on the Salem, the Shelbyville, the Manchester, or any other pike [from Murfreesboro] for a distance of thirty miles either way, what do we behold? One wide, wild, and dreary waste . . . . The fences are all burned down; the apple, the pear, and the plum trees burned in ashes long ago; the torch applied to thousands [?] of splendid mansions, the walls of which alone remain.<sup>1\*</sup>

The death toll of Tennesseans in both armies had been high. For others survival was but a reprieve, because men weakened and diseased from years of military service soon filled premature graves. Amputation was the only defense against gangrene and infection; therefore, many men hobbled back maimed or otherwise unfit for the heavy physical labor demanded by agricultural readjustment. The distress and destruction caused by the battling armies were augmented by problems posed by Negroes who now must be oriented to a new and, to many, a bewildering status.

\* For a contemporary description of the widespread damage sustained by the railroads of the state, especially the wanton destruction of bridges and locomotives, see letter written by John S. Claybrooke, president of the Tennessee and Alabama Railroad, to M. C. Meigs, August 23, 1865, in John S. Claybrooke Papers, Archives section, State Library, Nashville. Also, an elaborate report on the condition of Southern railroads may be found in *House Reports*, 39 Cong., 2 sess., Report No. 34.



Such gaping wounds in the economic and social order would heal—if at all—very slowly; only then could recovery reasonably be expected if the affairs of state were administered with tender care in a spirit of understanding and charity. Unfortunately, however, such would not be the case. A militant oligarchy had selected William Gannaway Brownlow as governor on March 4, 1865, and for four years this Ambassador of Ill-will was to impose himself upon the people of the state.\*

Although reference to Brownlow has been made in earlier chapters, a brief biographical sketch seems in order here. The new Governor, born in Wythe County, Virginia, in 1805, had become an orphan at an early age. He lived with an uncle who taught him the rudiments of farming before apprenticing him to a carpenter. Although Brownlow was denied the advantages of a formal education, he read extensively in his spare time. He soon grew tired of the building trade and, observing that in the Southern Appalachians the ministry was a field which required "not much education, . . . but that a large amount of religious fervor, excitability, and pugnacity would go a long way," he became for ten years a circuit-riding Methodist minister in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. An eloquent speaker, Brownlow preached sermons which consisted largely of diatribes against Baptists and Presbyterians. In 1839 he began publication of the Elizabethton *Tennessee Whig*, and thus embarked upon a journalistic career which helped thrust him into politics. He became a Henry Clay Whig and idolized the tall Kentuckian who three times was a presidential candidate. Always fluent, whether with tongue or pen, he entered actively into the social, economic, and political discussions of the time, and assumed the character of a crusader in the causes he espoused. As mentioned earlier, he nurtured especial hatred for "Rebels," and two terms as governor afforded him many opportunities to demonstrate his vengeful hostility.<sup>2</sup>

Brownlow assumed office on April 5, 1865, two days after the general assembly convened. He immediately dispatched to the legislators a message with strong recommendations for punishing former Confederates. The criminal code should be strengthened in order to crush the guerrilla menace, and the state militia reestablished and reorganized. The franchise should be restricted to Union men only; the freedmen must be protected from "those who

\* Brownlow's biographer has written of his election: "It was a strange and dangerous act to set a person of Brownlow's record to rule over a million people. In peaceful times it would have been perilous; in the confusion incident to the closing of a civil war, it might well seem preposterous. Unless the wild threats of his terrible vengeance upon the majority, . . . made constantly for the previous five years, were merely deep acting upon a broad stage, Tennessee might look forward to conditions worse than war. For the promoting of the orderly progress of peace, it would have been impossible to make a worse choice." Coulter, *Brownlow*, 262.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

*Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park View*

fought to perpetuate slavery"; and Confederate officers and bank directors should be held personally responsible for bank and railroad losses. The Governor further called for ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment and for the prompt election of United States Senators and Representatives.<sup>3</sup>

The legislature which was to act on these recommendations consisted of Union men, most of whom had had little or no political experience. The overwhelming majority were farmers, but a sprinkling of merchants and lawyers was also present. Most had been Whigs before the war. No clear-cut party alignments had developed when the legislators convened, and all were known simply as "Unionists." As they began work, however, division developed between those who accepted completely the Governor's proposals and those who objected to his proscriptive recommendations. The former had a working majority, and Samuel R. Rodgers, Brownlow's speaker of the senate, defined the

major aim of the assembly as being that of keeping the loyal people from ever being "governed by rebels."\*<sup>4</sup>

The Brownlow followers enacted much retributive legislation. They made horse stealing, housebreaking, burglary, and house or bridge burning capital offenses, and prescribed the gallows for guerrillas and armed prowlers. They enacted sedition laws which made a mockery of the Bill of Rights, and ratified the Thirteenth Amendment by a unanimous vote. Many other measures aimed directly at former Confederates were introduced. A joint resolution authorized the Governor to respond to the "cries of the wounded and dying, the wail of the widow, [and] the weeping of the orphan" by proclaiming a reward of \$5,000 for the arrest of former Governor Isham G. Harris.\*\* The Civil War governor had in 1861 wholly disregarded "the overwhelming expression of public sentiment," legislators alleged, and had used his position as governor "to put the state in rebellion." He was guilty of "treason, perjury, and theft," and "responsible to a great extent for the war . . ." Brownlow's proclamation followed immediately, and his description of Harris is typical of his state papers:

This culprit Harris, is about five feet ten inches high, weighs about One hundred and forty-five pounds and is about fifty-five Years of Age. His complexion is sallow—his eyes are dark and penetrating—a perfect index to the heart of a traitor—with the scowl and frown of a demon resting upon his brow. The study of mischief, and the practice of crime, have brought upon him premature baldness and a grey beard. With brazen-faced impudence, he talks loudly and boastingly about the overthrow of the Yankee Army, and entertains no doubt but the South will achieve her independence.

He chews tobacco rapidly, and is inordinately fond of liquor. In his moral structure, he is an unscrupulous man—steeped to the nose and chin in personal and political profligacy—now about lost to all sense of honor and shame—with a heart reckless of social duty, and fatally bent upon mischief. If captured, he will be found lurking in the rebel strongholds of Mississippi, Alabama, or Georgia, and in *female society*, alleging with the sheep-faced modesty of a virtuous man, that it is not a whole-

\* "Look at the returned rebels," Rodgers exclaimed to his fellow legislators on one occasion, "cursing this legislature as a bogus concern—and threatening to flog the niggers more than they ever did. I have long ago resolved never to be governed by rebels; I will leave the State first." Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party," 83.

\*\* Harris had joined other Confederates in Mexico after the war to develop "a new South" under Emperor Maximilian. After the overthrow and execution of the French puppet, Harris had gone to England but returned to Tennessee late in 1867 after Brownlow had the legislature repeal the reward offer. *Senate Journal*, 1867-68, p. 36; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 344; Rister, "Confederate Colony in Mexico," 39.



some state of public sentiment, or of taste, that forbids an indiscriminate mixing together of married men and women!<sup>5</sup>

The legislators took note of the recent assassination of President Lincoln, and expressed their sorrow in two joint resolutions. Five members of each house prepared resolutions expressing high regard for Lincoln's "intellectual, moral and social qualities," and his "humor, wit, sarcasm and wondrous powers of ridicule," which, with his "qualities of courage, will and indomitable persistency of purpose," had endeared him to the nation. They could not "find language strong enough," however, to express "condemnation of the assassin who performed, and the conspirators who plotted, the deed."<sup>6</sup>

The culmination of the Radicals' efforts was the passage of a franchise law designed to perpetuate their control of the state government. The measure, worded to exclude former Confederates, was enacted only after meeting serious opposition in the house where Speaker William Heiskell—now called a "Copperhead" by Brownlow—and Representative Edmund Cooper led the moderates. The law clearly defined six categories of voters: (1) men known publicly to have entertained "unconditional Union sentiments" throughout the war; (2) men who had become twenty-one years of age since March 4, 1865, providing they had not served with the Confederacy; (3) loyal citizens of other states who had migrated to Tennessee; (4) men discharged from, or now serving in, the United States army; (5) men of Union sentiments who had been drafted forcibly into Confederate service—on proof of their loyalty supported by testimony of two legitimate voters; and (6) those who voted in the election of November, 1864, February 22, 1865, or March 4, 1865, and all others who had been eligible to vote in the elections and would have voted had precincts been available. County court clerks were required to register and issue certificates to voters who could qualify under the act. Election officials, candidates, and voters were to take the test oath except persons of "publicly known Union sentiments."<sup>7</sup>

When the first session of the "Brownlow Assembly" adjourned in June, 1865, it was apparent that although the Governor had a working majority in the legislature, some opposition had formed. Two months later Conservatives\*

\* It should be remembered that Brownlow and the Tennessee Radicals followed the Radicals in Washington—Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, B. F. ("Beast") Butler, and others who favored a harsh reconstruction plan for the South. The Tennessee Conservatives—"solid and substantial Union men whose loyalty was above question"—followed President Johnson and the Washington Conservatives who wished to follow the presidential plan of leniency. They, in the words of Lincoln, wished to "bind up the nation's wounds, forget the scars of war, and again live in peace and harmony."

One careful student has claimed that, although the terms Radical and Conservative were used earlier, there were no parties in the state until the election of 1867, if a party is considered "an organization of voters based on self-interest and bent on getting control of the government." Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party," 66.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Savannah—Shiloh Military Park*

squarely challenged the Radical leaders in the congressional elections. Conservatives Edmund Cooper and William B. Campbell won seats in the fourth and fifth districts, respectively, and a strong vote was recorded for Emerson Etheridge, Dorsey B. Thomas, and other moderates in the other districts of Middle and West Tennessee.<sup>8</sup>

When the legislators reassembled in October, 1865, the Governor indicated alarm over the rent in the Radical fabric. Disturbed by the fact that all "rebeldom" openly supported Johnson and condemned the Radical Republicans in terms unbecoming and disrespectful of a victorious conqueror, he insisted that the franchise law be tightened. While not recommending enfranchisement of the Negroes at this time, Brownlow did urge that they be permitted to testify in courts and that all laws pertaining to them be scrutinized with a view to making adjustments between the races easier. It is doubtful that he seriously considered enfranchising the freedmen at this time since he, reflecting an aver-

sion to the Negro which characterized East Tennesseans, openly had condemned Negro suffrage and even had suggested that blacks be colonized in Texas or some other Western state.<sup>9</sup>

The new franchise law "divided the Governor's party into warring factions." When the bill came before the house for second reading on February 13, 1866, a parliamentary crisis was reached which delayed the passage of the measure until May 3. During the two and one-half months the opposition fillibustered and, finally, seventeen members resigned in order to prevent a quorum.\* Speaker Heiskell (a Conservative who was elected speaker before the Conservative—Radical split) had engaged James Mullins in a physical encounter, and other legislators engaged in brawls of their own. Finally, after new elections were held to fill the vacancies of those who had resigned, a Radical quorum was formed, but only after highly questionable election procedures had been employed by the Brownlow oligarchy. The measure passed the house on April 12, and was rushed to the senate. Efforts to block the bill failed, and three weeks later it became law.<sup>10</sup>

The new franchise measure was designed to exclude all but loyal Brownlow men. It had two important features. The first was largely a restatement of the original act and provided for the perpetual disfranchisement of all citizens otherwise eligible who had supported the Confederacy in any way. The second part assured Radical control so long as Brownlow was governor. Under the old law county court clerks had registered voters and, inasmuch as they were elected locally, some clerks in Conservative areas had permitted the registration of voters whose devotion to Brownlow was highly questionable. Therefore, at the Governor's insistence, the law was written to empower him to appoint new commissioners of registration. Brownlow now could appoint commissioners whose loyalty and devotion to the Radical cause was unquestioned.<sup>11</sup> Conservative efforts to have the law declared unconstitutional resulted in failure, and it remained on the statute books until the Radicals were driven from power.<sup>12</sup>

*Restoration, 1866*—Various leaders presented a variety of plans for reconstructing the prostrate South. Both Lincoln and Johnson contended that the Southern states had not been out of the Union but had existed in a state of suspended animation during their participation in the "rebellion." Now that the war was over these states needed only again to organize loyal governments, recognize

\* Those resigning were: William Barton of Cannon County; T. H. Bledsoe of Lincoln; N. Brandon of Stewart; W. Y. Elliot of Rutherford; Asa Faulkner of Warren; A. A. Freeman of Haywood; J. R. Hood of Hamilton; W. B. Lewis of Davidson; A. D. Nicks of Dickson; C. N. Ordway of Giles; W. P. Scales of Dyer; W. A. Simmons of Franklin; A. R. Steele of Marshall; S. P. Walker of Shelby; A. R. Wayne of Sumner; Pleasant Williams of Carter; and W. W. Willis of Hawkins. Queener, "Origin of Republican Party," 87-88.



Federal authority, and elect Representatives and Senators to Congress. Radical leaders, however, asserted that the seceded states had committed treason by their acts and must suffer in the refiner's fire before being restored to their ante bellum status. Vengeful Thaddeus Stevens, Radical leader in the House of Representatives, had suggested a "conquered province" theory, whereby Confederate states would become the property of Congress to be dealt with by that body as the members saw fit. Charles Sumner, equally powerful in the Senate, proposed the "state suicide" theory, in which he argued that the seceding states had lost their positions in the Union and were now territories subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress. Governor Brownlow announced a plan to be used in case Southerners rose in a second civil war. He believed that such a conflict was inevitable and that Andrew "Johnson would, in this second rebellion, take the place of Jeff Davis." After the "second rebellion" was put down the "loyal masses" should "make the entire Southern Confederacy as God found the earth when he commenced the work of creation, 'Without form and void.' They . . . ought not leave a rebel fence-rail, out-house, or dwelling in the eleven seceded states. And as for the rebel population, let them be exterminated," he said. Still others suggested no plans of their own but opposed the presidential plan for various reasons. Some wished to assure the permanent dominance of the Republican party in the South; others desired to use reconstruction as a tool to gain legislative authority over the executive; still others, sincerely or otherwise, feared the return of slavery unless the safety of the Negroes were guaranteed; and a fourth group wished to strengthen the government by nationalizing civil rights. In all groups there was present to a certain extent the desire for vengeance against a hated and now conquered foe.<sup>13</sup>

Johnson of course disagreed with the Radicals and sought to have Tennessee immediately restored to its former relations with the federal government. He rejoiced at the state's acceptance of the Thirteenth Amendment and the election of United States Senators and Representatives. He received gladly a request from the legislature that

the State of Tennessee be no longer considered in a state of insurrection, and that the loyal people of that state be granted all the rights and privileges that are granted . . . to the loyal citizens of any of the sister states that are not considered in a state of rebellion against the Government of the United States.<sup>14</sup>

The Radical Congress, however, much to the surprise and chagrin of Tennessee Radicals and to the dismay of Johnson, refused on December 4, 1865, to seat the Tennessee delegation. For several months the stalemate was debated both in and out of Congress. A joint committee on reconstruction, consisting of nine members from the House and six from the Senate, then was established to study the situation in all the Southern states. On April 30 the joint committee

suggested to Congress that when a seceded state ratified the proposed Fourteenth Amendment, it should be given representation in Congress.\*<sup>15</sup>

After forty members of Congress signed a statement in which they urged Brownlow to convene the legislature for the purpose of taking action on the proposed amendment, the Governor called the general assembly into special session on July 4.<sup>16</sup> Violent opposition immediately developed in Middle and West Tennessee. The editor of the Nashville *Dispatch* believed the implied proposition was "bait" which "may be withdrawn when we have been caught." The editor of the Nashville *Union and American* saw in the proposal an attempt to force "perfect social and political equality" of the races. Far more dangerous to American liberties than the Civil War itself, the plan was "without a parallel in American history." It was "not a question of punishing 'rebels,' but one aimed at a revolution of the social and political fabric . . .," he wrote.<sup>17</sup>

The house of representatives was in a high state of excitement after the senate had ratified the measure without difficulty. General George H. Thomas, then occupying Middle Tennessee with Federal troops, observed "considerable excitement on both sides of the issue" in the house, and expressed the fear that there existed "a disposition to break up the legislature." When house members opposed to the Amendment realized that they did not have sufficient strength to defeat ratification, they decided to accomplish their aims by absenting themselves, thus preventing the formation of a quorum. After six days of convening and adjourning because of no quorum, the rump issued warrants for various members. On July 16 the sergeant-at-arms, with the assistance of Negro troops, arrested Representatives Pleasant Williams of Carter County and A. J. Martin of Madison County and forcibly detained them in the capitol. Their applications for writs of habeas corpus were granted by Criminal Judge Thomas N. Frazier, of Davidson County, but the legislature denied the court's jurisdiction. Only after the sheriff had formed a *posse comitatus* and stormed the capitol were the two prisoners released.<sup>18</sup>

On the day before their release was effected (July 19), however, the house ratified the Amendment. Williams and Martin were recorded as present but having "failed and refused" to vote. Speaker Heiskell ruled that no quorum was present and then refused to sign the resolution ratifying the Amendment. He was overruled, however, and the speaker pro tem signed instead. On the following day Brownlow telegraphed the clerk of the Senate his oft-repeated notification: "We have fought the battle and won it. We have ratified the constitutional amendment in the house—43 to 11 against it, two of Andrew Johnson's tools not voting. Give my respects to the dead dog in the White House."<sup>19</sup> Thus by these questionable means was the Fourteenth Amendment ratified in Tennessee.

Three days later Congress recognized the government of Tennessee and

\* Although the measure failed to pass, it did become the means of Tennessee's restoration.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Memphis and Shelby County Court House*

restored the state to its former relation with the Union. Representative George S. Boutwell of Massachusetts and other Radicals failed, despite their determined efforts, to force Negro suffrage upon the people. The President signed the resolution on July 23, and on the same day the state's delegation was seated in the House. Senator-elect Joseph S. Fowler met with no opposition, but David T. Patterson (Johnson's son-in-law) was not received until several days later, following debate on his eligibility.<sup>20</sup>

*Negro Suffrage and the Election of 1867*—The Tennessee Radicals, although not blessed with the qualities of charity and mercy, were endowed with sufficient political acumen to realize that their cause would rise or fall with Parson Brownlow. Therefore, although the next gubernatorial election would not be held until August, 1867, they began in January of that year to hold county conventions in which they urged the reelection of their chief. On Washington's Birthday they assembled in Nashville where they praised Brownlow and damned President Johnson. They characterized Brownlow as a man of "firmness, courage, and wisdom" whose "healthy mind, conscious to itself of rectitude . . . bears with like



equanimity the throes of pain and the perilous cares of State. . . ,” and they swore they would support no other man for governor.<sup>21</sup>

A Negro suffrage bill was before the legislature when the Radicals assembled, and they strongly recommended its passage. The measure had been written largely at the insistence of Brownlow who for some time had concluded that the votes of loyal Negroes might be necessary to continue his regime in power. Although before the war he had been a staunch defender of slavery and more recently an opponent of Negro suffrage, the recent goadings of the Northern press and of Negro leaders, together with the realization that he might lose the election of 1867, caused him to change his views.\* Consequently, after considerable opposition was expressed by Conservatives, the measure enfranchising Negro men was enacted on February 26. Negroes\*\* and Radicals were jubilant over the law, while

\* In June, 1865, he had prophesied that “the negroes, like the Indian tribes will gradually become extinct—having no owners to care for them, and no one owning property in them, they will cease to increase in numbers . . . .” Brownlow was convinced that “idleness, starvation, and disease” would “remove the majority of the negroes in this generation.” Those who did survive and were loyal, however, should be given the ballot in preference to disloyal whites, he said.

Fifteen months later he told cheering Radicals in Philadelphia that the Tennessee legislature had “but one more law to pass,” and that was “a law enfranchising the negroes.” Back again in Tennessee, he approached the subject more cautiously by calling attention not infrequently to the “phenomenal” progress made by the blacks. They had “shown greater aptitude for learning and intelligence than was expected,” he told Tennessee Radicals, while observing that the “Rebels” had declined both morally and intellectually.

When the legislature reassembled on November 5, 1866, Brownlow insisted upon Negro suffrage. Not only was it morally right, he said, but it also was necessary to prevent another civil war. Already, he believed, agitators were plotting with President Johnson to overthrow the state government, and various “characters” had called a convention at Nashville for “the avowed purpose of initiating a revolution.” In Knoxville and elsewhere “unprincipled” persons plotted uprisings. Jordan, “Freedmen’s Bureau,” 58; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 328; *Nashville Daily Press and Times* (citing *Knoxville Whig*), July 3, 1865; *Nashville Union and American*, September 16, 1866; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 132-33; *House Journal*, 1866-67, 2 Adjourned sess., 16-17; *Senate Journal*, *ibid.*, 13-14.

\*\* Interestingly, at least one Negro apparently saw through the Radical scheme to “use” the black man’s vote for personal gain. He wrote to Brownlow as follows:

I learn that you and the . . . legislature have passed a law to allow the colored people of this state to vote . . . . But sir, you have, at this time, provided in the law that they shall not hold office . . . . You . . . can’t pull that wool over my eyes. The darkies in Tennessee, generally, will understand what you are after . . . . You want us to go voting with you but every time office for white man and vote for nigger.

Letter from Matt Dyer, of Jackson, Tennessee, to Governor Brownlow. Quoted in Walker, “Negro in Tennessee,” 41.

the editor of the *Memphis Appeal* typified the Conservative reaction when he observed that "the right to vote might just as safely be given to so many South American monkeys as to the plantation negroes." He called for "a pestilence" to sweep "the whole black breed . . . away . . . ." <sup>22</sup>

The two years after the conclusion of the war had been turbulent ones for the freedmen. Deluded by false hopes and promises, many of them had congregated in the cities where racial difficulties inevitably resulted. Although numerous clashes were reported in Nashville and elsewhere in Middle Tennessee, riots in Memphis and the western section surpassed those in the rest of the state in the degree of violence. In Memphis a small disturbance ripened into a major race riot on May 1, 1866, when a large group of Negroes, many of whom had only recently been discharged from the Federal army and who celebrated their new status with prolonged indulgences in intoxicating beverages, congregated on the corner of Main and South streets. A three-day riot began when Memphis police attempted to arrest two of the more disorderly blacks. Federal troops suppressed the disorders of the first day and again on the following morning. On the evening of the second day, however, armed whites swarmed through the Negro section setting fire to churches, school buildings, and dwellings. When Federal troops finally quelled the riot on May 3, nearly fifty people had been killed (forty-six of whom were Negroes), nearly twice that number were wounded, and property damage was estimated at over \$100,000. <sup>23</sup>

Brownlow used the Memphis riot to bring about legislative action on the Metropolitan Police District Bill which, when enacted several days later, gave the Governor complete control over law enforcement in Memphis. Brownlow appointed commissioners who in turn selected members of the police force to hold office at the pleasure of the board. Obviously this abolished the Memphis police system. The law was amended two months later to include Nashville and Chattanooga. Thus, by these measures the Governor had the police administration of the three largest cities within his grasp. Attempts to have the enactment declared unconstitutional failed, and the law remained on the statute books until the Conservative victories of 1869. <sup>24</sup>

Negroes were treated little better in East Tennessee, a condition which caused the Radicals much embarrassment. According to the editor of the *Knoxville Whig*, racial disturbances occurred daily on the streets of Knoxville. Bureau officials became discouraged, and one lamented that,

It is a melancholy fact that among the bitterest opponents of the Negro in Tennessee are the intensely radical loyalists of the mountain district—the men who have been in our armies . . . . In Middle and West Tennessee the largest and wealthiest planters of the old slaveholding population have more cordially cooperated with . . . [Bureau officials] than the people of East Tennessee.

Another official told of an old Union soldier in East Tennessee who threatened, "if you take away the military from Tennessee, the buzzards can't eat up the niggers as fast as we'll kill them."<sup>25</sup>

In the meantime Conservatives held a nominating convention in Nashville in April and selected Emerson Etheridge as their gubernatorial candidate. They realized that the Negroes would hold the balance of power in the forthcoming election and freely courted them with such expressions as "our colored fellow-citizens." The nomination of Etheridge was ill-advised, however. Although an able man of unquestioned integrity and loyalty to the Union, he had been a slaveholder who bitterly had opposed emancipation. More recently he had objected to extending the ballot and other privileges to the Negroes. Brownlow Radicals constantly emphasized these inconsistencies during the canvass.<sup>26</sup>

The incumbent Governor was too feeble to campaign extensively, but he had taken adequate measures to insure his victory even before Etheridge was nominated. During the debates on the Negro suffrage bill the Governor pushed through the legislature two measures which would give him more power. One, passed on February 20, provided for the raising of an armed force to be known as the Tennessee State Guard, with Brownlow as commander in chief. Troops were necessary, he said, to stop "atrocious murders and numerous outrages" which had been committed by "violent and disloyal men." The second law, passed five days later, strengthened the franchise law by giving the Governor authority to set aside registrations in any county. Brownlow, his dictatorial powers enhanced, now was ready for the gubernatorial campaign of 1867.<sup>27</sup>

The Governor's inability to campaign did not mean that he would not be represented on the hustings throughout the state. Horace Maynard was especially popular among Negroes and white Radicals. William B. Stokes (who became the Radical candidate in 1869), Samuel M. Arnell, and various other Radical leaders campaigned for the incumbent and prepared the Negroes for election day. At Murfreesboro a picnic was held for 1,500 Negroes, and at Gallatin a Negro preacher told his black audience that Brownlow was "a colored man" who deserved the support of every "other" colored man in Sumner County.<sup>28</sup>

Etheridge, although an able orator and campaigner, must have realized that defeat was his portion even before the campaign got under way. Radicals placed every possible obstacle in his path. At Greeneville he was forced to defend himself against bodily harm, and at Elizabethton a Brownlow supporter drew a pistol and pointed it at him as he spoke. At Rogersville, Knoxville, Gallatin, Franklin, Fayetteville, Lewisburg, Pulaski, Columbia, and other places disturbances occurred. In most counties contingents of the State Guard stood by menacingly as he spoke.<sup>29</sup>

On election day white Radicals and their black children of radicalism de-



livered the expected majority. The Governor won by a vote of 74,034 to 22,550, and all of the Radical candidates for Congress were elected.<sup>30</sup>

Shortly after the elections, Washington Radicals began seriously to move toward the impeachment of President Johnson. Brownlow's legislators were jubilant, and in October, 1867, considered a joint resolution requesting the state's Representatives "to vote for the impeachment articles against said Johnson." The Radical press, led by the Knoxville *Whig* and the Nashville *Daily Press and Times*, joined in the hue and cry, declaring that "no mercy" should be shown a chief executive who violated "the law." "Let Johnson be impeached, treason made odious, and the arch-traitor punished," wrote the editor of the Nashville paper. The editors of the Conservative newspaper in Nashville and Memphis, however, condemned the move as mere political chicanery and called upon the people to support the President in his hour of need.<sup>31</sup>

Tennesseans in the House did not need encouragement from the Radicals in the legislature or the press; their minds were made up. With the exception of Representative Isaac R. Hawkins, they voted for impeachment and denounced the President in the process. William B. Stokes charged Johnson with drunkenness while military governor, described him as a man who had "no regard for truth," and denounced him for attempting to "put the rebels in power to again plant their heels upon our necks and crush the colored men into dust." Representative James Mullins believed the President had ambitions to be "the sole legislator, the Nero of our day." "The Czar of Russia has never assumed more despotic power and more absolute sway than . . . [Johnson]," Mullins fumed.<sup>32</sup>

Toward the end of the trial Radicals both in and out of Tennessee concentrated their efforts on Senator Joseph S. Fowler in an attempt to persuade him to vote for conviction. It was assumed, of course, that Senator David T. Patterson, a Conservative and a son-in-law of the President, would vote for acquittal. Fowler received hundreds of visitors—not to mention letters and telegrams—who urged him to vote for conviction, but he remained noncommittal until the roll call. All of the Tennesseans in the lower house visited him and insisted that unless he could "represent what he well knows to be the sentiment of the loyal people of his state," he should resign or at least refrain from voting. Brownlow, who for personal reasons desired Johnson's conviction, was alleged to have offered Fowler an appointment to the state supreme court if he would resign.<sup>33</sup>

Upon roll call both Senators voted for acquittal. Although Fowler was termed a modern Judas by his erstwhile Radical cohorts, he held to his convictions, and thus joined six other recalcitrant Radicals in sparing the office of the presidency further insult.<sup>34</sup>

*The Ku Klux Klan*—Brownlow's overwhelming victory in 1867 and the apparent Radical determination to perpetuate the black peril in power disturbed

Conservative Unionists and old Confederates; they lamented that their cup of woe had been drained and that the situation had become intolerable. Indeed, throughout the Southern states such feeling was more apparent; the South was ripe for an underground movement. The feeling was expressed through many different organizations—Knights of the White Camelia, Pale Face League, Shotgun Club, Council of Safety, White Brotherhood, and others—but the best known was the Ku Klux Klan. All had generally the same aims: to recover for the whites control of government and society and to destroy the baneful influence of the carpetbaggers and Northern opportunists among Negroes. The work of the Union League irritated many Southern whites. This organization had been formed by Northern Radicals ostensibly for the purpose of teaching the blacks good citizenship and loyalty to the Union, but the real purpose became that of propagating the cause of the Radical Republicans. They taught the Negroes that Democrats, Conservatives, Copperheads, and Rebels, all were “devoid of principle and destitute of all sense of justice where the colored man” was concerned.<sup>35</sup>

The KKK (as it came to be known) was organized at Pulaski shortly after the war by a group of young men seeking amusement. By 1867 it had been transformed from a social club to a political organization when its leaders observed that they could frighten Negroes from the polls and Union Leaguers out of the South; if they could do this, then their day of political deliverance would come more quickly. The group grew rapidly and leaders determined upon a state meeting where a greater degree of centralization might be achieved.

Consequently, a secret convention was held at the Maxwell House Hotel\* in Nashville in April, 1867. So loyal were the leaders that they could assemble under the shadow of the capitol where Brownlow reigned and in the presence of federal troops and officers actually residing in the hotel. General Forrest was placed at the head of the organization, with the title of Grand Wizard of the Empire. Each state constituted a Realm headed by a Grand Dragon, each congressional district a Dominion under a Grand Titan, and each county a Province governed by a Grand Giant. Local units were called Dens, headed by a Grand Cyclops. A constitution, or prescript, set forth the various duties of the officials. A revised prescript was issued the following year and stated the purposes of the Klan. These included protection of “the weak, the innocent and the defenseless, from the indignities, wrongs, and outrages of the lawless, the violent, and the brutal”; aid to the suffering, especially “widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers”; protection and defense of the Constitution of the United States; and “aid in the execution of all constitutional laws.”<sup>36</sup>

For the next two years activities of the Klan were reported widely. Dis-

\* The Maxwell House, later to become a nationally known establishment, had just been completed when the meeting took place. Construction was begun by Colonel John Overton in 1859 and the half-built structure was used by the Federals during the war as a hospital.

guised men staged numerous night parades in cities and towns throughout Middle and West Tennessee and in some counties of East Tennessee. Activity was reported in most of the counties, but especially in Maury, Lincoln, Giles, Marshall, and Humphreys (in Middle Tennessee), and in Obion, Hardeman, Fayette, Gibson, and Dyer (in West Tennessee). Leaders in Negro affairs were abused and threatened. Even Brownlow reported having received threatening letters "accompanied with pictures of coffins, daggers, pistols and the gallows." Alleged depredations included murders, rapes, and whippings.<sup>37</sup>

The activities of the Klan and the exaggerated reports which circulated of course did not go unnoticed by members of the Radical party. Governor Brownlow reported in March, 1868, that he had received appeals for protection from many people in West and Middle Tennessee. When in June members of the Klan made an unsuccessful attempt upon the life of a Brownlow henchman, the Governor appealed to General George H. Thomas, commander of the Department of the Cumberland, for Federal troops. Thomas' refusal did not allay Brownlow's fears; the Governor was convinced that another war was in the making and that "a large amount of hanging would be necessary "to put down the rebellion."<sup>38</sup>

To meet the new emergency Brownlow called the legislature into an extraordinary session. He described the Klan as a "dangerous organization of ex-rebels" which had "grown into a political engine of oppression so powerful and aggressive as to call forth in opposition several notable military orders." He forcefully recommended that "these organized bands of assassins and robbers be declared outlaws by special legislation, and punished with death wherever found."<sup>39</sup>

The inflammatory message was received with both fear and anger by many Tennesseans. The editor of one Nashville paper described it as "the gauge of battle thrown to an exasperated people," while the editor of the *Gallatin Examiner* thought it was a declaration of war upon the Southern veterans. "If he [Brownlow] wishes war, he will find our entire population ready for it . . . . If war is the decision we can promise to make it short and sharp," he concluded. Cooler heads prevailed, however, and Conservatives insisted that the people wanted only peace. On August 1 ex-Confederate Generals, Benjamin F. Cheatham, W. B. Bate, Nathan Bedford Forrest, John C. Brown, Gideon J. Pillow, Bushrod R. Johnson, George Maney and six others assembled in Nashville and urged that peace and harmony replace the threats of war. Cheatham, Johnson, and Maney met with the joint legislative Military Committee in a "courteous and cordial assembly." They denied that they were hostile to the state government, that they or any organization desired the overthrow of the government by violence and illegal means, and that they wanted anything other than peace. The depredations of "armed men roving through portions of the country" was regrettable, but these would cease "as soon as the determination of the leaders to have peace was made known."<sup>40</sup>



It became evident that the olive branch would be spurned, however, when a few weeks later the special joint committee to study Ku Klux Klan outrages reported to the legislature. Committee members had taken testimony of "a great many" witnesses and had found that "a perfect reign of terror" existed in many of the counties of West and Middle Tennessee. Armed and disguised men were reported

to be going abroad . . . robbing poor Negroes . . . taking them out of their houses at night, hanging, shooting, and whipping them in a most cruel manner, and driving them from their houses . . . Women and children . . . [were] subjected to the torture of the lash, and brutal assaults . . . committed upon them by these night prowlers . . . In many instances, the persons of females . . . [were] violated, and when the husband or father complained, he had been obliged to flee to save his own life.<sup>41</sup>

The committee report supplied the motivation Brownlow desired. Two comprehensive measures were enacted. The first reestablished the state militia (the earlier act having expired) and gave the governor authority to declare martial law in any county where "the judge, attorney-general, senator, representative, and ten men of good character" declared that the law could not be enforced. The second, commonly called the Ku Klux Klan Act but officially designated as "An Act to Preserve the Public Peace," provided severe penalties for "any person or persons . . . [who] unite with, associate with, promote or encourage, any secret organization of persons that shall prowl through the country or towns . . . by day or by night, disguised or otherwise, for the purpose of disturbing the peace." Such persons were to be fined \$500, imprisoned in the state penitentiary for not less than five years, and "rendered infamous." The same punishment was provided for persons who impeded the prosecution of the guilty. All citizens were authorized to arrest violators of the act.<sup>42</sup>

Thus the stage was set for the presidential election of 1868. Brownlow, determined not to alienate the Washington Radicals, turned all the forces at his command to the support of Ulysses S. Grant. While Republicans won by a decisive majority, the vote when compared with that of 1867 indicates that the party of Brownlow had lost considerable strength in Middle and West Tennessee. The Klan no doubt played an important role in keeping both Negroes and white Radicals away from the polls. Too, fascination for the ballot had worn off for some Negroes. Still another factor was that the Union League had disbanded in some of the counties, thus causing confusion among Negro voters.<sup>43</sup>

When several months elapsed with no prominent ex-Confederate having been charged with violating the KKK law, Brownlow employed Captain Seymour Barmore of Cincinnati to spy upon prominent citizens in an effort to obtain names for a series of exemplary trials. The purpose of the ostentatious Barmore—who described himself as "the greatest detective in the world"—was soon dis-

covered by Nashville Klansmen who warned him to return to Cincinnati. He refused and caught a freight train to the center of Klan activity, Pulaski. There, dressed as a Klansman, he attended a meeting of the Pulaski Klan and obtained names of many of its members. The ruse was not discovered until Barmore had boarded a train for Nashville. At Columbia, however, Klansmen took him forcibly from the train. Six weeks later, on February 20, 1869, his body was recovered from Duck River. A rope was about his neck and a bullet had pierced his skull.<sup>44</sup>

On the same day that Barmore's body was recovered from the murky waters, Brownlow declared martial law in the counties of Gibson, Giles, Haywood, Jackson, Lawrence, Madison, Marshall, Maury, and Overton, where he believed lawlessness abounded and where the Klan still operated unimpeded. A few weeks earlier the Governor after much difficulty, had raised the desired number of men to constitute the new state militia, and he placed General Joseph A. Cooper in command.<sup>45</sup>

On February 25, 1869, Brownlow resigned in order to accept a seat in the United States Senate, and shortly thereafter General Forrest commanded that Klan masks and costumes be destroyed. Forrest believed that the Klan in large measure had accomplished its objects, and he regretted that many acts of violence, not committed by Klan members, were blamed upon the organization. Although his command frequently has been described as a "disbandment order," actually the Grand Wizard specified that "this order is not to be understood to dissolve the . . . Ku Klux Klan."<sup>46</sup>

*Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee*—Leaders of the Radical Congress entertained no idea of allowing Southerners to assume control over Negroes; on the contrary, Stevens, Sumner, and other Radicals determined at an early date to influence and manipulate the Negroes in the conquered provinces and thus insure Republican control. The major role in the operation was to be performed by the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands—more commonly called the Freedmen's Bureau—which was established in March, 1865.<sup>47</sup>

Bureau officials had considerable power. They distributed relief funds to needy whites as well as blacks. However, white people soon became a negligible factor in the program and the chief objective became that of safeguarding the Negroes. Bureau officials supervised Negroes' contracts with the white landowners, their education, and certainly their ballots after the franchise was conferred upon them. They also could set aside for use of loyal freedmen such tracts of land as were declared "abandoned," or which might be acquired by the government by sale or confiscation. Not more than forty acres could be leased to a freedman or refugee.<sup>48</sup>

General O. O. Howard, a man of good character who recently had been in command of the Army of the Tennessee, was named bureau commissioner, and General Clinton B. Fisk was named assistant commissioner in charge of

a district embracing Kentucky and Tennessee, with headquarters at Nashville. The districts were divided into sub-districts; three, and later five, were formed in Tennessee, with centers at Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, Pulaski, and Knoxville. Sub-districts in Middle and West Tennessee were divided further into agencies, usually coincident with the counties, with superintendents (commonly called agents) in charge.<sup>49</sup>

Tennesseans were fortunate in that at least two of the assistant commissioners were men of good character. Fisk served until September, 1866, and General W. P. Carlin acceded to the position in January, 1867. Both were men of education and quality who understood the people of the South; they enjoyed the confidence of all except the extreme Radicals. Fisk announced to the blacks in the beginning that they must "relieve" themselves. "Do not expect us to do all, nor half, but put your shoulders to the wheel and do for yourselves," he told a group of Middle Tennessee Negroes soon after his arrival in Nashville. He urged destitute blacks congregated in cities to return to the farm, make contracts with the white landowners, and begin work. Throughout the summer of 1865 he decreased the number of free rations issued, and by September, 1866 supplied them to only 153 persons. One year later General Carlin supplied only hospitals and orphan asylums with free commodities. Four orphanages and two hospitals were established under the administrations of Fisk and Carlin. The Freedmen's Bureau courts were abolished a few months after legislators enacted a bill allowing Negro testimony in the regular courts. By November, 1867, over ninety per cent of the abandoned lands had been returned to the original owners and Negro hopes of "forty acres and a mule" had been dispelled.<sup>50</sup>

The Educational Division performed one of the most important functions of the Bureau. Thousands of Northern teachers, with a variety of motives, attitudes, and intentions, poured into the South. Most considered themselves the spiritual and intellectual successors to Grant and Sherman; the blue-coats merely had conquered armies, but the teachers had the more important task of conquering and enlightening the Southern mind. The "political rights of the blackest man" must be "put on a level with the whitest," and the South must be made safe for "the reddest Republican" or "the blackest Abolitionist." Many of the Northern educators believed that such a condition could be accomplished only in integrated schools; the Reverend D. Burt, superintendent of education for the Bureau, was one of the leading spokesmen for mixed schools. Some educational leaders believed that miracles could be performed with the mind of the Negroes and were perturbed when native whites disagreed.\* Professor John Ogden, prin-

\* Negroes frequently were told of the "magic powers" of education. Teachers from Boston told some Richmond Negroes: "You boys who are laggards at school will drive donkeys on the streets of Richmond, while those that are industrious, studious, and obedient, will own the stores and mansions on Main Street." Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 81.





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Livingston—Business Area*

cipal of Fisk School (and later president of Fisk University), was distressed to learn that "the rebels" should "still aver that these 'Niggers' 'can't learn' "; he saw good reason to believe that "before ten years had clapsed" Rebel children would be taught by colored teachers.<sup>51</sup>

One of Fisk's first acts was to establish schools for Negroes on abandoned lands and to grant aid to schools already established by the American Missionary Society and other philanthropic organizations. By autumn of 1865 so many Negroes had flocked to the schools that additional buildings were erected and more teachers employed. Forty-one Negro schools with more than 9,000 pupils were in operation in Tennessee at the time of Fisk's departure in September, 1866. A few months later the legislature provided for the maintenance of Negro education, and soon many of the schools were taken over by the state.<sup>52</sup>

Many native whites did not sympathize with the purposes or methods of

the Bureau in educating the Negro; as one author\*\* has written, "The Southern reaction to the presense of the Yankee teacher was definite, decided, and violent." The majority of Southerners did not condemn Negro education, but had approved of such an idea both before and after the war. But they resented and feared the "typical Yankee teacher," whom they believed would do more to foment racial unrest than help the Negroes to develop intellectually and economically; and they feared racially mixed schools.<sup>53</sup>

Bureau officials received many reports of violence against schools and teachers. School buildings at Wartrace, Carthage, Decherd, Shelbyville, Brentwood, Athens, and other places were burned. Teachers at Carthage received advice to "go North where they belonged," and those at Somerville, Saulsbury, and elsewhere were beaten and threatened. M. M. Hiland, a Cheatham County white man who conducted a Negro school in the adjoining county of Dickson, reported in 1868 that he received a note signed "By order of the Grand Cyclops" as follows:

M. M. Hiland, alias Nigro [*sic*] Hiland:—

You are hereby notified to disband the school of which you are in charge at Jackson Chapel as it is contrary to the wishes of every respectable man in the vicinity and an insult to the refinement of the community. If this notice fails to effect its purpose, you may expect to find yourself suspended by a rope with your feet about six feet from terra firma. We hope you will give the same consideration: and in case of failure on your part, we intend to carry into execution the above mentioned plan.

BEWARE! BEWARE!! BEWARE!!!<sup>54</sup>

Despite discouragement, officials continued the schools. J. H. Barnum, assistant superintendent of the Educational Division of the Bureau, toured Middle Tennessee in 1868 and received favorable reports. His first stop was at White Bluff, where he found many people who "manifested a great interest in the subject of schools." Elsewhere across the state he found little opposition to the Negro schools and concluded that whites had become accustomed to them. Shortly thereafter a reporter for the *Daily Press and Times* visited many counties in Middle Tennessee and corroborated Barnum's report. The editor of the Conservative Nashville *Republican Banner* argued that the South must "make the best of" the Negro by educating and training him. The editor urged Southerners to assume the burden instead of letting the Yankees do it.<sup>55</sup>

While the teachers taught Negroes reading, writing, and arithmetic, Bureau officials taught them Republicanism. In most of the other Southern states the Bureau became little more than a political propaganda machine designed to perpetuate the Radicals in power, but in Tennessee officials probably were less active

\*\* Swint, *Northern Teacher in South*, 94.

than in other states. Carlin was unpopular among the Radicals because of his failure to enter the political arena and because he instructed local agents to abstain from local politics. For these and other acts the editor of the Radical *Nashville Daily Press and Times* termed him "a bolter and disorganizer" who "would sell out the district to the . . . [Conservative] party." Fisk was more active than Carlin. Soon after his arrival he promised that he would work for Negro suffrage, and he permitted his name to be used occasionally for endorsing various candidates.<sup>56</sup>

The Bureau, like the other parts of the Reconstruction program, probably will remain forever a subject for debate. To George B. Guild, who witnessed its activities in his home county of Sumner, the Bureau's work was destructive and was manned by persons "of the meanest type." "If all the meanness enacted by the Freedmen's Bureau and Brownlow's militia in Sumner County could be reduced to writing, it would form a library more extensive than Mr. Carnegie has ever conceived," he wrote in 1903. Beyond any doubt it did foment racial disturbances and prolonged the period of unsatisfactory adjustment between blacks and whites. On the other hand, the Bureau was indeed a material boon to the freedmen. It issued thousands of rations to starving people, established schools and hospitals, and guided Negroes into a new life.<sup>57</sup>

*Radicals and the Railroads\**—One student of the Reconstruction period has written that "the worst legislation . . . [enacted during the Radical period] was that in which aid to railroads was involved." Another has described the railroad matter as "the most putrid mess perhaps to be found in the annals of Tennessee history." Whether they have overstated the case is a matter of opinion. None can deny, however, that the state was plunged deeply into debt, and the credit of the state was jeopardized.<sup>58</sup>

It will be recalled that the decade of the 1850's was an era of railroad expansion. Tennessee, like other states, had loaned money to companies, and legislators had provided certain railroads with loans in the amount of \$10,000 per mile, with additional amounts for bridges. By 1861 a fairly satisfactory system of transportation had been built by companies which showed no danger of financial disaster.<sup>59</sup>

Although during the period 1862-1865 the Federal government built several hundred miles of railroads and repaired others, in general the war left Tennessee roads and companies in poor condition; as one historian has written, "reconstruction completed the destruction." The Brownlow administration attempted to rebuild the entire system. Such a venture required enormous expenditures at a time when most of the people struggled for the bare necessities, but the Radicals apparently were not deterred by these facts. By the end of the Brownlow ad-

\* For a more complete treatment, see Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Radicals and the Railroads," in Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 659-73.



ministration they had appropriated nearly \$14,000,000 for the relief of the railroad companies.<sup>60</sup>

In view of this unprecedented generosity on the part of the state it might appear that the railroad companies could have become completely reconstructed, financially rehabilitated and free of debt. The generosity, however, was matched only by unprecedented corruption on the part of the railroad officials, who used the money for private speculation, or bribing legislators to grant additional amounts, and for clothes and furniture, instead of for repairing the railroads and maintaining efficient operations. These practices were carried on to such an extent that the railroads could not (or would not) pay even the interest on the bonds, which further impaired the shaky credit of the commonwealth. When the state defaulted on bonds maturing in 1867-68 the price of Tennessee securities dropped considerably. Several railroad officials who were able to pay interest refused to do so, in hope that the state would default so that they might buy up past due coupons at a low rate and later cash them at full value. The railroad men, able to manipulate the price of state securities, freely speculated in Tennessee bonds on the market.<sup>61</sup>

Despite such practices, another assault was attempted on the state treasury in the autumn of 1868 when a "Bill for the Relief of Unfinished Railroads" was introduced. The measure, according to one estimate, would siphon off an additional three million dollars from the state treasury. The bill passed the senate and probably would have been rushed through the house had not Comptroller G. W. Blackburn asserted vigorous opposition. In an official communication to house members he stated:

Since the introduction of the Bill, proposing to increase the State debt nearly three millions of dollars, I have received many dispatches and letters . . . Some of the best friends the State has in New York . . . write me *positively* that New York will carry our State no longer, if we increase our liabilities now, by issuing more Bonds to railroads . . . \*

This message turned the tide against the bill, and it was defeated by a small majority. The Conservatives soon displaced the Radicals, and the big steal for the railroads was over. An enormous debt remained, however, and not until 1883 was a settlement reached.\*\*<sup>62</sup>

Committees were appointed from time to time to investigate the conduct of railroad officials. At the suggestion of Governor Brownlow one was formed in 1868, but the members surprised no one when they discovered nothing. Another, formed in 1869 after Brownlow went to the Senate, reported that considerable fraud had transpired. The Mineral Home Railroad, for example, which

\* Robert H. White has written that the letter "threw the House of Representatives into a conniption fit." *Messages of Governors*, V, 646.

\*\* For further details see Chapter 31.

existed entirely on paper—"not a shovel of dirt was ever dug, nor even a survey of the route attempted"—received \$100,000 in state bonds. Talk of repudiating some of the bonds hastily was quieted, however, when Washington Radicals threatened military reconstruction.<sup>63</sup>

It remained for the legislature of 1879 to uncover the sordid details of the most amazing and flagrant conduct of the railroad and government officials. Legislators were bought and sold, and even Parson Brownlow—although perhaps innocently—profited handsomely. Governor Albert S. Marks told legislators in 1879 that efforts of "honest men" in the Radical-dominated legislatures "were unavailing." According to Marks and the legislative committee appointed to investigate the situation,

. . . appropriations were refused [by legislatures of the Brownlow period] unless the members were paid to make them . . . Bonds were sold at a large discount to raise money to pay members to vote for further appropriations . . . Fine brandy by the barrel was on hand to fire thirst and muddle the brain, and . . . money was . . . in abundance and it was used.<sup>64</sup>

The most amazing testimony in the 1879 investigations, however, came from General Joseph A. Mabry, the erstwhile "kingpin of the railroad lobbyists," who testified under protest as follows:

Myself and the other gentlemen . . . were in New York, and engaged in bond speculations. Some of us had sold 'bonds short' and desired to depress 'their price' . . . Some of us consulted a celebrated New York Spiritualist, Madame Mansfield, and she told us that bonds would go down and that there would be trouble in Tennessee, . . . but we could control 'old scratch', meaning Governor Brownlow, with money . . . We had speculated in bonds on account of Governor Brownlow, and had made nearly \$5,000. We then determined to make the Governor a present of the \$5,000, furnishing out of our own private means what we had failed of the \$5,000 in our speculating for his benefit. I notified him the day before that we would, Callaway and myself went up to present it, he was lying on a lounge and told us to give it to his wife and we did so . . . \*

There is no evidence that the Governor considered the money anything more than a gift from a friend who was more blessed with worldly goods than he and Mrs. Brownlow. But such innocence did not extend to Mabry and the other lobbyists; they sought more appropriations to fatten their already bulging cof-

\* Mrs. Brownlow saw no impropriety in accepting the \$5,000. The railroad men "were under great obligations to Governor Brownlow for many acts of kindness," she told a newspaper reporter during the investigation of 1879. Therefore, when "they begged" her to "accept a present from them," she could not refuse. *Knoxville Weekly Whig and Chronicle*, March 29, 1879, quoted in Lynn, "Tennessee's Public Debt," 6.



*Memphis—Cotton Carnival, view of The Grand Parade*

fers, and they wanted friends in high places who would come to their rescue in case of trouble.<sup>65</sup>

The story of the settlement of the tremendous debt, saddled upon the taxpayers of Tennessee by unscrupulous government and railroad officials, is discussed in the next chapter.



*Downfall of the Radicals and Return of the Old Confederates*—Brownlow had been elected to succeed United States Senator Patterson, whose term expired March 4, 1869. Consequently, the Governor resigned on February 25, 1869, and was succeeded by DeWitt C. Senter, speaker of the senate, whom Brownlow described as "a loyal man, capable, tried, and trusty, who is sound in his principles and who will steadily adhere to them upon the platform of the Union Republican party in Tennessee."<sup>66</sup>

Brownlow based his description of the new governor upon the record. Senter, an East Tennessean, had served three terms in the legislature before the war and had voted against secession in 1861. He had been imprisoned by the Confederates, driven from his home by guerrillas, and had lived in Louisville during the war. In 1865 he returned and was elected to the state senate. There he voted for disfranchisement of the Confederates and otherwise supported Brownlow and the Radicals. As a member of the senate in 1867, he had taken a leading role in the election of Brownlow to the Senate.<sup>67</sup>

Senter proceeded cautiously during his first few weeks as governor and determined upon only slight modification of the Brownlow program. One of his first official acts was to declare the militia subordinate to civil government and to make clear that it did not supersede civil law. Shortly thereafter he mustered out the militia. With the removal of martial law only disfranchisement kept the former Confederates from resuming positions of power, but in this respect Senter gave the disfranchised little hope for immediate relief. Until the campaign for governor in 1869, Confederates had no reason to consider Senter anything but a "mild" Radical.<sup>68</sup>

When Radicals held a gubernatorial convention in Nashville on May 20, 1869, the field of hopefuls had narrowed to Senter and General William B. Stokes, Congressman from the Third District, whom Brownlow had defeated two years earlier in the election to the Senate. Each was supported by a faction determined to nominate its man, and soon the convention became—as one writer has described it—"fit only for lunatics." A few days later when the session was concluded each faction claimed its favorite to be the Radical nominee. Thus, both Stokes and Senter became gubernatorial candidates.<sup>69</sup>

Conservatives declined to nominate a candidate but proposed to support the Radical nominee who appeared most favorable to their cause. At first they leaned toward Stokes. He was a Middle Tennessean not tainted with Brownlowism, while Senter, endorsed by the Governor and considered the "administration candidate," was believed to favor continued disfranchisement. They soon shifted wholeheartedly to Senter, however, when it became apparent that enfranchisement of the Confederate veterans would be the major issue.<sup>70</sup>

On June 5 the campaign opened in Nashville. Stokes favored a gradual return of the ex-Confederates to the ballot box, and suggested that such might be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of the legislators upon each disfranchised

person who could prove that he was peaceful and law-abiding. Senter, however, proposed universal manhood suffrage and promised if elected to remove all restrictions. Brownlow, who always reserved for himself the right to change his mind when not on a popular side, left Radicals dumbfounded by supporting Senter's stand.\* He was aware of the trends of the times, however; he also knew that the state supreme court six weeks earlier had rendered a unanimous decision declaring unconstitutional the legislative act which had conferred on the governor the power to set aside registrations of voters of a county where he detected fraud.<sup>71</sup>

The campaign waxed bitter throughout the summer and much strife was aroused wherever the candidates spoke. Governor Senter knew that Stokes had the bulk of the Radical support, but believed that he (Senter) could be elected if enough ex-Confederates were granted the franchise before the election. Consequently, he began the wholesale removal of Radical registrars in counties across the state and replaced them with Conservatives. Thousands of Rebels soon were announcing proudly their intention of carrying the day for Senter. Toward the end of the campaign Stokes, in Middle and West Tennessee, shifted to a position of universal suffrage. At Memphis he admitted that "suffrage is a dead letter. Any man can get a certificate." At Huntington he promised to "enfranchise every man of God's green earth who will come up and ask for it."<sup>72</sup>

Senter's election was now a foregone conclusion. He received a majority of 65,297 out of 175,369 votes cast. Furthermore, the Conservatives won control of the legislature. The next general assembly would have twenty Conservatives and five Radicals in the senate, and sixty-six Conservatives and seventeen Radicals in the house.\*\* The election meant that Reconstruction was over in Tennessee and that the power of the Radical minority and Negroes was broken.<sup>73</sup>

One careful student has assigned five reasons for the Senter victory. The first is the political war of attrition waged by the Conservatives who harassed the Radicals at every turn. They made capital out of Radical mistakes and won

\* Radical dismay is well depicted by a statement appearing in a Shelbyville newspaper: "We are prepared to hear that the roses were blooming in Lapland; . . . that the sun and moon had changed their orbits; . . . that the tide of the Mississippi had rolled back to the Minnesota, and that of the Missouri to the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, but we were not prepared to hear that the Boanerges of Tennessee Radicalism had basely deserted his own standard and allied himself with Andrew Johnson, Isham G. Harris, Emerson Etheridge, N. B. Forrest and every unrepentant rebel in the State on the suffrage question, but so it is." *Shelbyville Republican*, quoted in Sharp, "Downfall of the Radicals," 118-19.

\*\* The Conservative general assembly consisted primarily of men who had been Whigs before the war. It was not until the elections of November, 1870, that the name "Democrat" was used interchangeably with that of "Conservative." Alexander, "Whiggery and Reconstruction in Tennessee," 302.

even some support from the inner sanctum of Radicalism itself. Secondly, many of the white Radicals lost confidence in Brownlow and other leaders and refused to go along with them on some measures. Thirdly, the enthusiasm of the Negro began to wane. By 1869, Negroes, hoping to hold lucrative offices, had been disappointed. Then, too, activity of the Klan had discouraged many. Fourth, the supreme court decision rendered in April, 1869, in the case of *State vs. William Staten*, had taken from the governor some of his arbitrary disfranchisement powers and had the effect of extending the ballot to his enemies. Finally, the "fatal animosity and dissension" which developed within the ranks of the party itself accounts for the downfall of the Radicals.<sup>74</sup>

Why did Senter desert his Radical friends? Apparently he, like Brownlow, realized that Radicalism was a dying cause in Tennessee. No senatorial position opened as a means of escape as in the case of his predecessor; therefore, he determined to play the role of a Conservative hero rather than that of a Radical goat.<sup>75</sup>

The Conservative legislature began immediately to undo much of the Radical program. The state guard act and the "Act to Preserve the Peace" (Ku Klux Klan law) were repealed. Oaths for officeholders were removed. As mentioned earlier, the disabilities of Judge Frazier were removed, and his conviction declared to be "unjust and undeserved, and calculated to injure an honest man, a pure patriot, and an upright and incorruptible Judge." Most important of all, the legislature submitted to the people the question of electing delegates to a constitutional convention in which it was assumed that the fundamental law would be purified of Radicalism. By a five-to-one majority the people voted in favor of the convention, which assembled in January, 1870, the proceedings of which will be discussed in the next chapter.<sup>76</sup>

Radicals did not accept the revolution without a struggle. Stokes and others believed that the federal government would declare Senter's election illegal, and urged Congress to place the state under military reconstruction. Their hopes were in vain, however, and their cause proved to be dead in Tennessee.<sup>77</sup>

Thus after four years of Radicalism, the government of Tennessee again was in the hands of the majority. Within recent years there has been a tendency among scholars to treat the reconstruction period with greater objectivity than formerly. Certainly the Radicals were in power during a trying time and when the chief executive offered little by way of leadership. Certainly they did much to encourage industry, immigration, and education (to be discussed in later chapters) during a time of the state's greatest need. Whatever accomplishments might be claimed for them, however, it must be admitted that the democratic principle of majority rule was abandoned. Little was seen of charity, forbearance, and compromise, which are such necessary ingredients in the satisfactory workings of a democracy.



## CHAPTER XXIX—NOTES

1. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 49; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 601.
2. *Ibid.*, 600; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 1-4; Brownlow, *Parson Brownlow's Book*, 15-17.  
For an appraisal of Brownlow's journalistic activities, see Verton M. Queener, "Brownlow as an Editor," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 4 (1932), 67-83.
3. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 72; Verton M. Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party in East Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 13 (1941), 83; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 88; Feistman, "Radical Disfranchisement and Restoration of Tennessee," 138-39; *Senate Journal*, 1865, 1 sess., 18-32. The senate and house journals of 1865 bear no number in the regular series. Professor Thomas Alexander has referred to the General Assembly of 1865 simply as "the Brownlow Assembly." See Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 259, n. 1.
4. *Ibid.*, 69-71, Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 603; quotations from *Knoxville Whig*, May 3, 1865, in Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party," 83.
5. *Public Acts*, 1865, 1 sess., Chap. V, 20; Chap. XV, 32; Resolution X, 134; Resolution XXXIV, 147-48; White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 440; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 97 n.; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 73; "A Proclamation by William G. Brownlow, Governor of Tennessee," *American Historical Magazine*, III (April, 1898), 151-54; Carl Coke Rister, "Carlota, A Confederate Colony in Mexico," *Journal of Southern History*, XI (February, 1945), 36-37, 39, 44.
6. *Public Acts*, 1865, 1 sess., Resolutions XVIII and XIX, 138-41.
7. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 74-75; *Public Acts*, 1865, 1 sess., Chap. XVI, 32-36; Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party," 86.
8. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 79-97.
9. *Ibid.*, 103; *Senate Journal*, 1865-66, 1 adjourned sess., 4-16; *House Journal*, 1865-66, 1 adjourned sess., 5-26.
10. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 115-16; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 109; Queener, "Origin of the Republican Party," 87.
11. James W. Fertig, *The Secession and Reconstruction of Tennessee* (Chicago, 1898), 86; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 286; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 118; *Public Acts*, 1865-66, 2 sess., Chap. XXXIII, 42-48.
12. *Nashville Daily Press and Times*, January 23, 1867; *Ridley vs. Sherbrook*, 43 Tenn. 569.
13. J. F. Rhodes, *History of the United States Since the Compromise of 1850* (9 vols., New York, 1893-1919), V, 533-35; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 207-08; Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic* (2 vols. New York, 1950), II, 38.
14. *Public Acts*, 1865, 1 sess., Resolution XXI, 141-42.
15. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 208, 216; *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 3-5, 2286; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 110-11; E. Merton Coulter, *The South During Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (Baton Rouge, 1947), 43.
16. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 217; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 110-11; *Senate Journal*, 1866, extra sess., 3-4; White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 510-11.
17. *Nashville Dispatch*, June 30, 1866; *Union and American*, June 27, 1866.
18. *Nashville Daily Press and Times*, July 18-20, 1866; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 217, 219, 221-23; *Proceedings of the High Court of Impeachment in the case of . . . Thomas N. Frazier* (Nashville, 1867), 47, 111-16; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 111; Cortez A. M. Ewing, "Early Tennessee Impeachments," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVI (December, 1957), 327-34

19. *Dispatch*, July 18, 1866; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 615-16; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 312-15; Winston, *Andrew Johnson*, 351.
20. *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 3994 ff., 4055-56, 4113, 4213 ff.; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 119-21; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 224-25; Howard K. Beale, *The Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (New York, 1930), 97.
21. Johnson, on the other hand, was characterized as unprincipled and degenerate, having brought "disgrace" upon Tennessee, and worthy only of being deposed. Edward McPherson, *The Political History of the United States of America during the Period of Reconstruction* (Washington, 1875), 249; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 327.
22. Weymouth T. Jordan, "The Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 11 (1939), 58; Joseph E. Walker, "The Negro in Tennessee during the Reconstruction Period" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1933), 108; *Public Acts*, 1866-67, 2 adjourned sess., Chap. XXVI, 6-33; Alrutheus A. Taylor, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1865-1880* (Washington, 1941), 45; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 329-30; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 133-34; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 130; J. Reuben Sheeler, "The Development of Unionism in East Tennessee, 1860-1866," *Journal of Negro History*, XXIX (1944), 202.
23. *House Executive Documents*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., Vol. 12, No. 122; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 227; Robert E. Corlew, "The Negro in Tennessee" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1954), 27-28; Capers, *River Town*, 177-78, 181. For a thorough and well-written recent treatment of the Memphis race riot, see Jack D. L. Holmes, "The Underlying Causes of the Memphis Race Riot of 1866," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (September, 1958), 195-221.
24. *Public Acts*, 1865-66, 2 adjourned sess., Chap. XXXV, 52-62; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 40; Taylor, *Negro In Tennessee*, 87-89; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 227-29; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 173.
25. *Knoxville Whig*, September 27, 1865; Walter L. Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox* (New Haven, 1919), 48.
26. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 136-37.
27. *Public Acts*, 1866-67, 2 adjourned sess., Chap. XXIV, 24-25; *Daily Press and Times*, March 14, 1867; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 331-33; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 149-50; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 176.
28. *Daily Press and Times*, July 26, 1867; *Knoxville Whig*, April 17, 1867, as quoted in Coulter, *Brownlow*, 335.
29. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 149-56; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 177-78.
30. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 55.
31. *Daily Press and Times*, October 10, 1867, February 25, 1868; Patton, "Tennessee's Attitude Toward the Impeachment and Trial of Andrew Johnson," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 9 (1931), 68, 70, 72.
32. *Ibid.*, 72; *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 2 sess., 1395-96, 1557-58; Robert Selph Henry, *The Story of Reconstruction* (New York, 1951), 307-08.
33. Patton, "Tennessee's Attitude," 74; *Daily Press and Times*, May 15, July 28, 1868.
34. Patton, "Tennessee's Attitude," 75. Milton, Winston, and Stryker, in their works on Johnson as previously cited, deal adequately with Johnson's impeachment and trial.
35. Fleming, *Sequel to Appomattox*, 244; Anne Kent, "The Ku Klux Klan in Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1935), 2; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 179; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 352; Stanley Horn, *The Invisible Empire* (Boston, 1939), 75; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 142-43, 145.

- The best general survey of the Klan is found in Horn's *Invisible Empire*. The work includes a chapter on the Klan in Tennessee. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, pp. 176-98, has written an excellent chapter on the Klan in Tennessee. (His material appeared substantially in the same form a year earlier, under title of "Kukluxism in Tennessee, 1865-1869," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VIII (September, 1949), 195-219. Good surveys also appear in Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 635-55, and in Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 170-200.
36. *Ibid.*, 181; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 353-54; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 179-80; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 635; D. Sherrell Figuers, "Biographical Sketch of Colonel John Overton," MS in possession of author.
  37. *Senate Journal*, 1868, extra sess., 131; Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 79; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 181; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 95; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 187; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 355.
  38. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 189-90; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 184; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 94; Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 101.
  39. *Ibid.*, 102; *Senate Journal*, 1868, extra sess., 7.
  40. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 191-92; Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 103-04; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 187; *Daily Press and Times*, August 2, 1868.
  41. *Senate Journal*, 1868, extra sess., 131-32.
  42. *Public Acts*, 1868, extra sess., Chap. II, 18-23, Chap. III, 23-25; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 171; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 195; Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 107; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 97; Kent, "Ku Klux Klan," 99.
  43. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 192-93; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 366.
  44. Horn, *Invisible Empire*, 108-12; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 196-97.
  45. Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 199.
  46. J. C. Lester and D. L. Wilson, *Ku Klux Klan, Its Origin, Growth, and Disbandment* (New York, 1905), 128-232; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 99-100; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 200; Horn, *Ku Klux Klan*, 357 ff.; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 197; *Public Acts*, 1869-1870, 1 sess., Chap. LIV, 67-68.
  47. *House Executive Documents*, 39 Cong., 1 sess., No. 11, 40-41; Paul S. Peirce, *The Freedmen's Bureau, A Chapter in the History of Reconstruction* (Iowa City, 1904), *State University of Iowa, Studies in Sociology, Economics, Politics and History*, III, I, Chap. I; Henry Lee Swint, *The Northern Teacher in the South, 1862-1870* (Nashville, 1941), 4. For an excellent discussion of the "forerunners of the Bureau," see George R. Bentley, *A History of the Freedmen's Bureau* (Philadelphia, 1955), Chap. II.
  48. Frank L. Owsley, Oliver P. Chitwood, and H. C. Nixon, *The United States: From Colony to World Power* (New York, 1949), 470-72; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, Chap. IV; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 150.
  49. *Ibid.*, 150; Bentley, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 52-60; Jordan, "Freedmen's Bureau" 49; "Senate Executive Documents," 39 Cong., 2 sess., No. 6, 126-27.
  50. Bentley, *Freedmen's Bureau*, 67; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 79; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 155-56, 158, 160; Jordan, "Freedmen's Bureau," 50, 51-52, 53-54; *Daily Press and Times*, March 14, July 22, 1867; *Nashville Union*, October 6, 1865.
  51. Swint, *Northern Teacher in South*, 58, 63; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 80-81; Editorial, *Independent*, October 22, 1868; Frank B. Williams, "John Eaton, Jr., Editor, Politician, and School Administrator, 1865-1870," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, X (December, 1951), 303, 305.



52. Jordan, "Freedmen's Bureau," 55-57; Taylor, *Negro in Tennessee*, 168-69, 170 ff.; *Public Acts*, 1866-1867, 2 adjourned sess., Chap. XXVII, 33-48.
53. Swint, *Northern Teacher in South*, 94-95; Williams, "John Eaton, Jr.," 305, 305n.
54. *Ibid.*, 131; *Daily Press and Times*, April 27, 1868; Corlew, *Dickson County*, 112; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 164.
55. John Eaton, Jr., *First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1869), 94; Williams, "John Eaton, Jr.," 315; Barnum to Brvt. Lt. Col. James Thomason, Asst. Commissioner of Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, in Henry Lee Swint (ed.), "Reports from Educational Agents of the Freedmen's Bureau in Tennessee, 1865-1870," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, I (March, 1942), 62; *Northern Teacher in South*, 116, 118, 121, 139; *Daily Press and Times*, March 26, 1868; *Nashville Republican Banner*, June 1, 1867.
56. *Daily Press and Times*, March 14, 1867, quoted in Jordan, "Freedmen's Bureau," 52; Patton, *Unionism and Reconstruction*, 160.
57. George B. Guild, "Reconstruction Times in Sumner County," *American Historical Magazine*, VIII (October, 1903), 356.
58. James B. Campbell, "East Tennessee During the Radical Regime, 1865-1869," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 20 (1948), 85; White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 602.
59. *Ibid.*, IV, 435-40; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 660.
60. *Ibid.*, 661, 664; Corlew, *Dickson County*, 98; *Senate Journal*, 1865, adjourned sess., 4-26; *House Journal*, 1865, adjourned sess., 5-26; White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 600-02, 625.
61. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 665.
62. White, *Messages of Governors*, V, 645; *Appendix, Senate and House Journals*, 1868-69, 2 sess., 75-76; *Senate Journal*, 1868-69, 2 sess., 19.
63. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 666, 670.
64. White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 603; *House Journal*, 1879, *Appendix*, 15-16.
65. *Ibid.*, 167-79; Alice Lynn, "Tennessee's Public Debt as an Issue in Politics, 1870-1883" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1934), 6; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 377-80.
66. *Daily Press and Times*, February 13, 1869; A. J. Sharp, "The Downfall of the Radicals in Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 106; *Senate Journal*, 1867-68, 1 sess., 64; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 347.
67. Sharp, "Downfall of the Radicals," 107; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 212.
68. *Ibid.*, 212; Sharp, "Downfall of the Radicals," 108.
69. *Ibid.*, 111-13; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 215.
70. *Ibid.*, 216; Sharp, "Downfall of the Radicals," 115.
71. *Ibid.*, 115, 118; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 217; "Whiggery and Reconstruction in Tennessee," *Journal of Southern History*, XVI (February, 1950), 298; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 392; *State vs. William Staten*, 46 Tenn. 233.
72. Sharp, "Downfall of the Radicals," 120-22; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 217-18.
73. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 230-31; Coulter, *South During Reconstruction*, 349.
74. Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 200.
75. *Ibid.*, 219-20; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 651.
76. *Ibid.*, 652-53; Coulter, *Brownlow*, 394; Alexander, *Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 230; Ewing, "Tennessee Impeachments," 334.
77. *Ibid.*, 226.

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## CHAPTER XXX

### *Postwar Recovery*

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WITH THE BROWNLOW ADMINISTRATION behind them, Tennesseans now turned to other problems, most of which were legacies of the Reconstruction period. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the people had voted for a revision of the fundamental law soon after Governor Senter's election, and early in January delegates convened for the first major constitutional convention in nearly four decades. The state debt, a Civil War-Reconstruction legacy which increased at a fearful rate, required settlement, and soon after the convention attention was focused upon it. Democrats were divided over whether to pay the debt or to repudiate it, but Republicans, who composed a formidable minority, advocated paying it off at par. Another postwar problem was that of rehabilitating the state's economic system. Farmers, hurt by declining prices, made gains slowly if at all. To many leaders, industry loomed as the answer to the South's economic problems. Tennessee, like other Southern states, had its share of protagonists of the "New South" philosophy, and through their influence Northern capital and industry were secured for the urban centers.

*Constitutional Convention of 1870*—Delegates to the constitutional convention assembled according to plan on January 10, 1870. They brought to the assembly an array of political talent and experience. The majority had been slaveholders, and were men of property and conservative temperament. One had been governor of the state. Several others, including the chairman, later were to become governor. A few had served in the federal and Confederate Congresses, and over half had been members of the state legislature. Most of them had served in the Civil War, and four had been Confederate generals.<sup>1</sup>

With such leaders the new charter might be expected to reflect their sound and sober judgment rather than any extreme measures that might prove attractive to less experienced men. The result of their efforts was a constitution which met the needs of the people and served without amendment until the limited convention of 1953.

John C. Brown, a Pulaski lawyer and former Confederate general, was chosen president of the convention. Brown realized, as did other members, that Radicals, both in Tennessee and in Washington, watched the proceedings with

careful eye,\* and he was determined that "wisdom, prudence, and moderation" should mark the deliberations. He urged delegates to raise themselves "above the passions of the hour," to "accept the situation, and not seek to alter circumstances which have passed beyond our control." He hoped to see Tennesseans avoid the military occupation which harassed citizens of some of the other Southern states.<sup>2</sup>

Brown appointed committees to study a variety of subjects which included the bill of rights; legislative department; executive department; elections and right of suffrage; finance, internal improvements and corporations; and miscellaneous subjects. Only the question of suffrage gave rise to considerable debate.<sup>3</sup>

The members of the committee on suffrage were unable to agree on the question of Negro voting and submitted both a majority and a minority report. The majority proposed to extend the ballot to all male citizens, regardless of race, who had resided in the state for a least six months and who had paid their poll taxes. The minority wished to limit the privilege of voting to white men only. Opposition to Negro suffrage came from each of the three grand divisions of the state, but more particularly from West and Middle Tennessee. James Fentress, a thirty-two year old Hardeman County lawyer who had served with the Confederacy, believed that the Negro lacked the virtue and the intelligence requisite for a voter. He also argued that enfranchisement was tantamount to social equality. This he said, would cause continual warfare between the races. James D. Porter of Henry County, who later was elected governor, believed that Negroes were not ready to vote and that to confer upon them such a privilege "would be . . . [their] ruin." Many Middle Tennessee delegates also raised objections. W. H. Williamson of Wilson County argued that "no well organized government has or can ever exist where the political power is divided between men of different races." C. Vance Thompson of Maury County believed blacks were stupid; he would as soon "give the right to vote to a baboon as to a Negro." Both urged acceptance of the minority report. William Blount Carter, a bridge-burner now turned Conservative Republican, spoke for East Tennesseans who opposed the majority report. He believed that Negro enfranchisement would bring about the destruction of "our republican system," and he was confident that to give blacks the ballot was against the best wishes of the majority of Tennesseans.<sup>4</sup>

\* Tennessee Radicals, at home and in Washington, urged Congress to place the state under military rule with the other former Confederate states. Congressman Lewis Tillman of Shelbyville was especially active in such efforts and described the government under Senter as consisting of former Confederates who were "tramping underfoot" all law and order. A large conclave of Negroes, which convened in Nashville on January 2, had reported to Congress that "the Rebel party" now in power in the state was "unchristian, inhuman, and beyond toleration"; Negroes and other Unionists could find relief, they said, only through military reconstruction. Nashville *Union and American*, January 2, 1870; Alexander, *Political Reconstruction*, 235.





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Paris*

John Netherland, an East Tennessee Whig who supported McClellan in 1864, sought to calm the fears of those who saw danger in the Negro vote. He pointed to the fact that whites outnumbered blacks three to one. Negroes, he believed, could be "taught to vote," and "would be the friend of the white man when the white man showed that he was the friend of the black man." To those who condemned Negroes because they, having been slaves, were freed by force, Netherland asserted, "It was the Government"—not the Negroes who did the deed. Neill S. Brown and his brother John C. Brown, representing Davidson and Giles counties respectively, spoke in favor of Negro suffrage because they feared federal intervention if the blacks were not given more recognition. Many others, fearing federal armies more than Negro enfranchisement, supported the majority report and it was adopted by a vote of fifty-six to eighteen.<sup>5</sup>

Included within the fourth article was a poll tax requirement which also became a subject for debate. Although five delegates signed a statement in which they alleged that such a tax was "an unjust discrimination against the poor man," and others protested orally against it, the provision was adopted. Few if any of the delegates who favored the tax wanted to exclude Negroes from the ballot box. Editors of Tennessee newspapers who had supported Negro suffrage expressed no fear or concern that the law would exclude the blacks, and a Negro editor asserted that colored men were as "able to pay a dollar, or fifty cents, as people . . . in general . . ."\*\*6

Few changes were made in the bill of rights except to abolish slavery and provide for Negro suffrage. The delegates, learning a lesson from the Brownlow assemblies, prohibited future legislatures from lending the credit of the state "in aid of any person, association, company, corporation or municipality." They also provided that legislators could not be paid for more than seventy-five days of a regular session and twenty days of a special session. To prevent hasty action on amendments to the federal Constitution, they provided that no convention or general assembly should act on any proposed amendment unless that convention or assembly had been elected after the submission of the proposed amendment. Partly to rid the state of Radical domination in the supreme court, the convention enlarged the judicial body to five members and provided that not more than two were to reside in any one grand division of the state. The exceedingly difficult process of amending the basic law as provided in the constitution of 1835 was retained.

After a session of six weeks the delegates adjourned (on February 23) and

\* One careful student has written that "it is difficult to connect the poll tax with Negro suffrage . . . . The best explanation for the tax being included in the suffrage article seems to be that it was considered as a means of raising much needed money for the schools, and it satisfied the conservative belief that good citizens paid taxes." Frank B. Williams, Jr., "The Poll Tax as a Suffrage Requirement in the South, 1870-1901" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1950), 76, 86.



submitted their work to the people for ratification or rejection. March 26 was the date set for the referendum. Editors of the *Nashville Union and American*, *Pulaski Citizen*, *Knoxville Daily Press and Herald*, *Memphis Avalanche*, *Clarks-ville Tobacco Leaf*, and many other papers urged that the document be ratified. Radicals, however, insisted that it be rejected, and some leaders from that group hastened to Washington to urge military intervention for Tennessee. In fear of federal interference, House Speaker W. O. Perkins and Senate Speaker D. B. Thomas issued a joint statement to Congress in which they refuted "false and mischievous" charges that the legislature and convention had been composed of "rebels," and that the two bodies had enacted laws of a discriminatory nature affecting the "colored and Union men of the state." A careful examination of the constitution itself, they wrote, would indicate that delegates secured "equal rights and liberties for all, and discriminations against none, on account of race and color . . . ."<sup>7</sup>

On the appointed day the people accepted the new constitution by a vote of 98,128 to 33,872. Although Negroes were kept from the polls in some isolated precincts, the referendum in general was a fair expression of the public sentiment. Radicals carried their case to President Ulysses S. Grant but he refused to interfere in their behalf.<sup>8</sup>

*Politics and the State Debt, 1870-1883*—During the period under consideration the Democrats became well entrenched and the Republicans were relegated to a minority status. The Democrats, who controlled West and Middle Tennessee and for a while made serious inroads into Unionist East Tennessee during the two decades following Reconstruction, included several distinct elements. Within their ranks were former Whigs, Know Nothings, and lifelong Democrats; the vast majority were former Confederates, but some were Union men who had rejected the extremes of Radicalism. The party, which included men of such diverse antecedents as Andrew Johnson, Thomas A. R. Nelson, Isham G. Harris, A. O. P. Nicholson, and Nathan Bedford Forrest, had at least one strong bond of union: their insistence upon white supremacy and their concomitant determination that Radicalism should not return to a dominant position within the state. The Republican support came chiefly from East Tennessee, but a few of the counties along the Tennessee River in the western part of the state which voted against secession also were counted within party ranks. The conduct of the Brownlow gang had decimated Republican ranks, but the assurance that the leaders could control the Negro votes strengthened flagging Republican morale.<sup>9</sup>

The first gubernatorial election under the new constitution was held in November, 1870, and resulted in a decisive victory for the Democrats. John C. Brown's work in the constitutional convention had led to his nomination as the Democratic standard bearer; Republicans had selected William Wisener of Shelbyville, who also had been a delegate in the convention. Not only was Brown



elected by a two-to-one majority,\* but his party captured twenty of the twenty-five senatorial seats and sixty of the seventy-five places in the house. Furthermore, they won six of the eight seats in Congress and, still not satisfied, began to lay plans for the capture of at least one of the two congressional seats held by the Republicans. Democrats were chosen to fill all of the major state offices, including those of speakers of both houses of the legislature. Lawmakers proceeded to gerrymander the state so that, according to Shelby County Senator J. J. Dubose, "for the next ten years not a Republican can be elected . . ."<sup>10</sup>

The vindictive policy pursued by the former Confederates within the Democratic ranks drove some Conservative Unionists from the fold and resulted in a serious breach in 1872. Thomas A. R. Nelson and other Unionists sought to form a third party in conjunction with the abortive Liberal Republican movement of that year. Andrew Johnson, whose indomitable ambition remained undimmed by shabby treatment received from Washington Radicals, caused the most serious break. Shortly after his return from the nation's capital he entered a contest for United States Senator. Defeated, he then plunged into a race for Congressman-at-large against Democratic nominee Benjamin F. Cheatham and Republican Horace Maynard.<sup>\*\*\*11</sup>

Republicans nominated Alfred A. Freeman of Haywood County as their gubernatorial candidate and Democrats chose Brown for reelection. Maynard and Freeman quietly sought a united Republican front, while Johnson, whose hatred of the privileged class and the Confederate leaders became even more pronounced after the war, was determined to defeat the "damned Brigadiers," even at the expense of party harmony. Consequently, Maynard was elected.<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Although Brown was reelected by a small majority,<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> the Democratic congressional majority was reduced to a minority, and a fusion of Republicans and Johnson Democrats controlled the legislature.<sup>12</sup>

Republican hopes of gaining permanent control through cooperation with the Johnson group soon were destroyed by the conduct of the Washington politicians. In 1874 Charles Sumner, whose bitterness against former Confederates increased with each passing year, proposed a civil rights bill which provided that "all persons" should be entitled to "the full and equal" enjoyment of all accommodations of hotels, theaters, common carriers, and the like. The measure,

\* Brown received 78,979 votes, and Wisener polled 41,500. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.

\*\* Maynard, a Massachusetts-born "scholar in politics," had been graduated from Amherst College, and had gone to East Tennessee College in 1839 as a teacher of mathematics and ancient and modern languages. Aloof and haughty, Maynard during the Reconstruction had followed Sumner and Stevens in opposing any leniency whatsoever toward the former Confederates. Folmsbee, *East Tennessee University*, 35; Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 78.

\*\*\* Maynard received 80,000 votes and Cheatham polled 63,000. Johnson ran third with 37,000. Milton, *Age of Hate*, 665.

\*\*\*\* Brown received 97,000 votes to Freeman's 84,089. *House Journal*, 1873, p. 48.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Camden*

later declared unconstitutional, was sufficient for the time being to solidify Democrats for the election of 1874. They nominated James D. Porter of Henry County for governor and charged that Congressman Maynard, now the Republican nominee, was an ardent integrationist. Maynard vigorously denied the charge and repeatedly asserted his belief that while Negroes should have equal rights, legislation upon the subject was not necessary. He did not, however, convince either Republicans or Democrats in any part of the state. Porter, thanks to the Civil Rights Bill, carried even the Republican stronghold of East Tennessee and defeated the Congressman by a two-to-one majority.\* Republican stock fell so low that even Parson Brownlow was reported to have voted the Democratic ticket in a Knoxville election in 1875. His son, John B. Brownlow,

\* Porter won by a vote of 105,061 to 55,847. His vote in East Tennessee was 21,189 to Maynard's 19,061. B. F. C. Brooks, Greenback candidate, polled 222 votes. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.



wrote of the "fearful demoralization" within the party caused by "Sumner's legacy."<sup>13</sup>

The legislature which assembled in 1875 elected Andrew Johnson to the United States Senate to replace Brownlow, whose term soon would expire. The former President had returned to Greeneville in March, 1869, and had begun immediately to rebuild political fences. In April, 1869, he told a Knoxville audience that he would devote the rest of his life to a vindication of his public career. When he spoke to Negro groups he not infrequently reminded them that it was he, not Lincoln, who had freed the slaves in Tennessee. Before farmer and debtor groups he denounced the rich bondholders and urged legislators to repudiate the public debt. As mentioned, he was nominated for the Senate soon after his return from Washington, but Judge Henry Cooper defeated him by a slim margin of 55 to 51. Interestingly, when President Grant received word that Johnson might be elected, he stated that he would consider it a "personal insult" to himself. In the autumn of 1874 Johnson launched a statewide campaign in the interest of his senatorial candidacy. When the legislature convened in January, 1875, nearly a dozen names were presented for consideration, but the voting soon narrowed to a contest among Johnson, John C. Brown, and General William B. Bate. Finally, on January 26, after several days of balloting, Johnson won on the fifty-fifth ballot. He considered the victory a great personal triumph since it would enable him to return to the body which had tried his impeachment. He took his seat on March 4, 1875,\* denounced President Grant, but died on July 31. David M. Key of Chattanooga was appointed to fill the vacancy.<sup>14</sup>

The year 1876 was a presidential election year and found Tennessee Republicans demoralized from the effects of "Sumner's legacy" and "Grantism." They nominated no candidate to oppose Governor Porter's bid for reelection, but they divided their support among an independent candidate named Dorsey B. Thomas, George Maney, and a Knoxville Negro lawyer named William F. Yardley. Porter won by a decisive majority.\*\* In the same year Democratic presidential candidate Samuel J. Tilden carried Tennessee, but later a special electoral commission with a Republican majority "counted in" Rutherford B. Hayes in a disputed election. Before his inauguration Hayes named Senator David M. Key of Tennessee as postmaster-general.\*\*\*<sup>15</sup>

Governor Porter refused a third term in 1877, and Democratic leaders

\* Interestingly, General Ambrose Burnside of Rhode Island and former Vice President Hannibal Hamlin of Maine were inaugurated at the same time. The oath was administered by Vice President Henry Wilson, who seven years before had voted for Johnson's conviction. Milton, *Age of Hate*, 670-71.

\*\* Porter polled 123,740 votes, Thomas received 73,695, Maney received 10,436, and Yardley polled only 2,165. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.

\*\*\* Hayes first seriously considered nominating General Joseph E. Johnston to a cabinet post but was dissuaded by W. T. Sherman and others. He then decided upon Key, who was confirmed by the Senate, 54 to 2.



nominated Albert S. Marks of Winchester. Republicans at first selected Emerson Etheridge, who declined, and then chose E. M. Wight, a medical doctor from Chattanooga. The National Greenback party,\* which had made a national appearance in 1876, nominated R. M. Edwards of Cleveland. The question of the state debt became the major issue, and solutions to the problem were offered in the platforms of the three parties.<sup>16</sup>

For more than a decade after the Democratic restoration, the dominating issue in state politics was the question of the state debt. As has been observed in earlier chapters, the state had pursued a very liberal policy in promoting the development of railroads during the three decades before the election of Governor Brown. While some of the Southern states had established state-owned railroads, Tennessee had loaned its credit to private corporations and accepted in return the stocks and bonds of these companies. Before Brownlow's election state funds had been invested generally in sound bank stock and railroad companies which made regular dividend and coupon payments. Tennessee first issued bonds in 1832 in order to purchase \$500,000 of stock in the Union Bank of Tennessee. More bonds were issued in 1838 in order that the state might purchase one million dollars worth of stock in the Bank of Tennessee. None of the Bank of Tennessee bonds had been retired by the time of the Civil War, but three-fourths of the Union Bank bonds had been paid off. Other bonds were issued to complete the state capitol, to purchase the Hermitage property, and to aid the Agriculture Bureau in erecting buildings at the Fair Grounds. The destructive Civil War weakened the railroad companies to such an extent that after 1865 many of them could no longer make payments; the state, however, still was liable for the debt and the accruing interest. The Brownlow policy of free-spending, in which reckless and fraudulent loans were made even to hopelessly bankrupt lines, has been discussed in an earlier chapter. At the time of Parson's election the principal of the "state debt proper"—which included obligations for the banks as mentioned, the internal improvement companies, the capitol, and the Hermitage property—totaled \$3,894,600; the principal on the railroad debt was \$16,213,000. The total debt, principal and interest, amounted to over \$25,277,000. By the time of Brown's election the debt exceeded \$43,000,000, much of which was the "railroad debt."<sup>17</sup>

Republicans agreed that the debt should be repaid; if it were scaled down it should be done only with the full knowledge and consent of the creditors. Democrats were divided on the matter. Although all Democrats blamed Republicans for the debt and accused them of bad judgment and fraud, the industrial—or "state credit"—wing favored full payment and demanded that the state's credit be maintained. Talk of default, they believed, would frighten away Northern capital and consign Tennessee to an agrarian grave. Opinions among

\* Colonel A. S. Colyar of Nashville was listed among the organizers of the party in Tennessee. *Nashville Daily American*, May 7, 1876.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Beale Street*

other elements in the party varied. Some people, like Andrew Johnson, advocated outright repudiation\* of the debt; others recommended negotiation with bondholders to arrive at a fair but realistic figure consistent with the state's financial condition. The latter group generally was known as "low tax" Democrats.<sup>18</sup>

The debt question did not become acute until after the Panic of 1873. During the administration of John C. Brown the debt was reduced by nearly one-third, but the depression which followed the panic made further payment difficult. A funding act, passed in 1873, authorized the issuance of more six per cent bonds to take care of the unpaid interest on the debt, but two years later the state defaulted in the payment of interest on the bonds. During Porter's ad-

\* "Repudiationists" argued that the Brownlow administration, which issued many of the bonds, was a revolutionary government by usurpation and did not represent the whole people. Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 52.

ministration bondholders became increasingly uneasy as talk of repudiation became rife.\* Acting upon advice of some of the security owners, Governor Porter, a state credit Democrat, in 1877 urged legislators to confer with the creditors and develop a suitable plan of adjustment. A legislative committee, after conferring with bondholders and considering plans which they proposed, reported to the general assembly that the creditors would settle for sixty per cent of the principal and unpaid interest, if paid with new six per cent bonds. The report came too late in the regular session for legislative action; therefore, Governor Porter called an extra session on December 5. Five days later the Governor announced that he had been assured by bondholders that they would accept fifty cents on the dollar, and he recommended that legislators act before the creditors changed their minds. When the legislature dominated by "low tax" Democrats, decided that their call into extra session had limited them to consideration of the sixty per cent matter only, the assembly adjourned *sine die* so that Porter might call members again into extra session. On December 11 the lawmakers re-convened to consider the fifty per cent proposal. Again legislators could not agree on scaling down the debt, and the second session ended on December 28, with nothing accomplished.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, in the gubernatorial campaign of 1878 the debt question loomed large. Democratic candidate Marks condemned Republicans for contracting an unfair debt while the majority of the people were disfranchised. He pledged an "equitable adjustment" of the entire debt question and promised to "submit . . . to the people for their ratification or rejection" any proposal which legislators might make on the matter. Republicans condemned Democrats for their failure to pay the debt and opposed scaling it down "except so far as the creditors may voluntarily concede . . . ." Marks won by a two-to-one majority.\*\* Democrats controlled the legislature and also won all of the congressional districts except the second.<sup>20</sup>

Governor Marks, a Confederate soldier who lost a leg at Murfreesboro, was a judge of chancery court at the time of his election. At his insistence a legislative committee was formed to study the debt question and make recommendations. The report showed that during the Brownlow administration railroad officials had conspired to defraud the state, had not complied with the terms of the appropriation measures, and even had given a generous present to the Brownlow family for protection.\*\*\* This evidence strengthened the demand that the "Brownlow debt" be repudiated and caused interest to mount in favor of the fifty per cent proposal. Legislators then passed an act providing settlement as follows: the state debt proper would be paid at sixty cents on the dollar

\* Tennessee bonds which in 1873 sold at \$.79 on the dollar declined to an all-time low of \$.35 on the dollar in 1878. Thorogood, *Financial History of Tennessee*, 217.

\*\* The outcome was as follows: Marks, 89,958 votes; Wight, 42,284 votes; and Edwards, 15,155 votes. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.

\*\*\* This matter has been discussed more fully in the preceding chapter.



with four per cent interest—or “sixty and four,” to use the terminology of the time; the prewar portion of the railroad debt would be divided into three parts and some paid at “sixty and four,” some at “fifty and four,” and some at “thirty and four”; the postwar railroad debt would be paid at thirty-three cents with no interest; and a small issue to the “Mineral Home Railroad Company,” which never existed, would be repudiated entirely. The proposal then was to be submitted to the bondholders who must accept it by a two-thirds majority, and to the people who must accept by a simple majority. The weary creditors agreed to the plan, but the repudiationists joined those who believed that the debt should be paid in full and defeated the proposal when it was submitted to the people.\*<sup>21</sup>

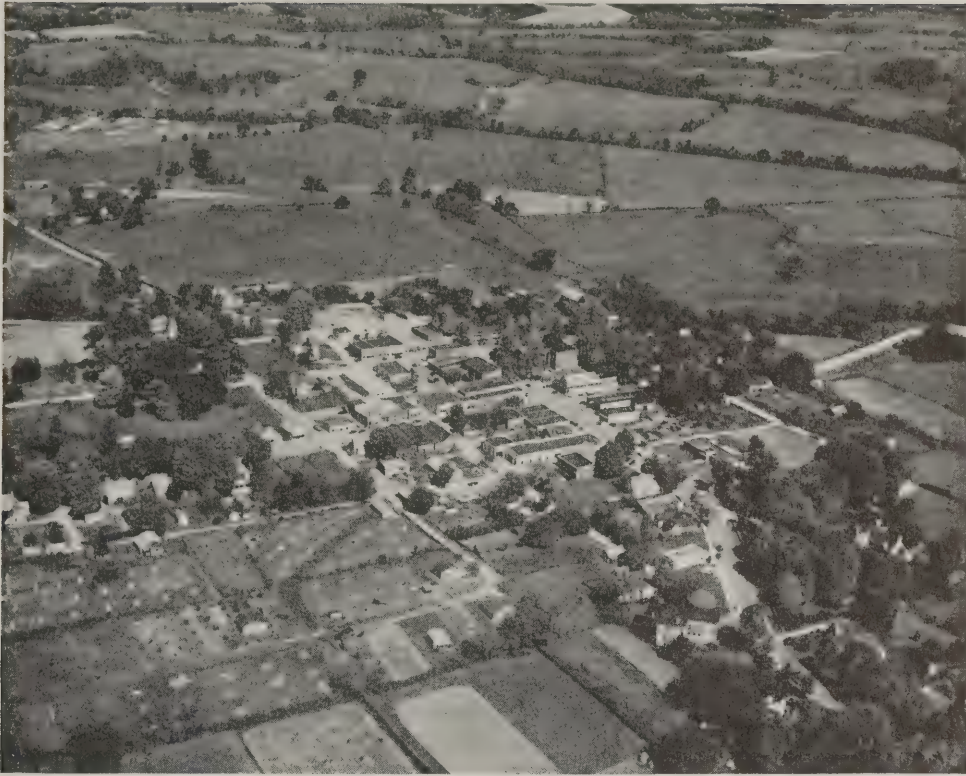
Democrats were divided over the debt question when they assembled in convention in 1880. The state credit faction, which declared repudiation to be “evil” and pledged “a prompt settlement upon the best terms that can be agreed upon,” nominated John V. Wright of Columbia after more than one hundred low tax Democrats walked out of the convention. The low tax men, or “repudiationists” as the state credit men called them, refused to support Wright and nominated S. F. Wilson of Sumner County. They pledged speedy payment of the state debt proper, but denied any obligation to pay the railroad debt. Republicans nominated Alvin Hawkins of Huntingdon and branded any attempt to scale the debt—unless the “voluntary consent of the bondholders [had been] fairly and understandably obtained”—as “high-handed dishonesty.” The Greenback-Labor party nominated R. M. Edwards; they proposed payment of the state debt proper but a repudiation of the rest. In the campaign Hawkins and Wright were viewed as the champions of the state’s obligation to pay so much of the debt as was insisted upon by the creditors; Wilson and Edwards were considered repudiationists. Last minute efforts by Democrats to restore party harmony were unavailing, and Hawkins was elected.\*\* Republicans also gained control of the house of representatives and elected three of the ten congressmen.<sup>22</sup>

State credit legislators—Republicans and Democrats—enacted a debt settlement law far more favorable to the creditors than the one which the voters had rejected two years before. The new law provided for three per cent bonds to pay off the debt at one hundred cents on the dollar, including unpaid interest; coupons receivable would be used for taxes. To meet payment on the bonds, legislators quadrupled the property tax, levied a thirty cent *ad valorem* tax on merchants, and established a thirty cent privilege tax. Taxpayers immediately contested the act in the courts, and in February, 1882, the supreme court declared the law unconstitutional on the grounds that future legislatures were illegally bound by the provision making bond coupons receivable for future taxes.<sup>23</sup>

The legislature was called into extra session three months later and on May 20 enacted a law funding the principal at sixty cents on the dollar, with a gradu-

\* The vote was 76,333 to 49,772. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 687.

\*\* Hawkins received 103,964 votes; Wright got 78,783, Wilson received 57,080, and Edwards polled 3,459. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 688.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

### *Pikeville*

ated interest rate from two to six per cent. Creditors, however, rejected this offer in the apparent belief that they might be able to get more favorable terms.<sup>24</sup>

Both parties held nominating conventions soon after the supreme court decision was rendered. Republicans chose Hawkins for reelection and openly courted the state credit Democrats. Harmony within the Democracy was restored largely by leaders who upheld the bugaboo of Republican domination. General William B. Bate, supported by Isham G. Harris, was nominated as a "compromise" candidate, but even then some of the state credit faction withdrew. Bate's popularity, coupled with antipathy to Republican rule, assured Democrats of the victory, and the General won by a comfortable margin.<sup>\*25</sup>

The Democratic platform had called for the payment of the state debt pro-

\* Bate received 120,637 votes to Hawkins' 93,168. F. H. Fussell, who had been nominated by a few dissatisfied state credit Democrats, received 4,814. John R. Beasley, Greenback candidate, ran third with 9,660 votes. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.

per in full and the remainder at fifty cents on the dollar. Democrats, in control of the legislature which assembled in 1883, enacted on March 20 a law in which they pledged the state to pay in full "the bonds held by Mrs. James K. Polk, . . . all bonds held by educational, literary, and charitable institutions," and a portion of the remaining debt. Most of the railroad debt was paid on a "fifty and three" basis. The state debt proper was divided into three parts; some of it was paid at "seventy-six and six," some at "seventy-nine and five," and some at "eighty and four." The creditors, weary from the years of turmoil, accepted the offer. The debt question thus was settled, but the solution did not form a bond strong enough to weld the Democratic party together, as will be discussed in the next chapter.<sup>26</sup>

*Negroes Enter Politics*—Negroes were fairly active in Tennessee politics during the two decades following the Brownlow regime. Leaders entered many political contests, including one for governor, but few were successful. Nearly a dozen served in the house of representatives during the 1870's and 1880's, but none was successful in a race for the senate, Congress, or the governorship. Practically all voted Republican ticket, but some became discouraged when they received little support from the white party leaders.

One of the first Negroes to become prominent in Middle Tennessee was Sampson W. Keeble, a Nashville barber and bank director, who was elected to the house of representatives in 1872. He attended Governor Brown's banquet for the legislators at the Maxwell House Hotel and sat "side by side with his fellow members and with them drank champagne, and said afterwards he was treated with the utmost courtesy." He served only one term and introduced only three bills, none of which passed beyond first reading. On practically all issues he followed the lead of L. C. Houk, Knox County representative and Republican leader.<sup>27</sup>

No other Negro served in the legislature during the decade, but, as mentioned earlier, William Francis Yardley, a Knoxville lawyer, became a candidate for governor in 1876. The son of a Negro father and Irish mother, Yardley was an intelligent, well-trained, and affluent lawyer and businessman, who had held a half dozen local offices in Knoxville and Knox County before 1876. His race for governor caused white Republican leaders considerable embarrassment, especially when Democratic leaders encouraged him and publicized his campaign in the leading newspapers. He polled few votes, however, as mentioned earlier, and after the race he retired from state politics.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1880's other Negroes served in the house of representatives. T. F. Cassels and I. F. Norris, of Shelby County, J. W. Boyd of Tipton County, and Thomas A. Sykes of Davidson County, were elected in 1880. Cassels, their leader, stirred up considerable debate when he introduced a bill which would "prohibit the unlawful carnal intercourse of white persons with negroes, mulattoes, and persons of mixed blood descended from the negro race . . ." When



the bill was tabled, Sykes and Cassels turned their attention to a measure which would repeal the segregation law of 1875. This statute, objectionable to many Negroes, gave innkeepers, carriers of passengers, and operators of places of amusement the right to admit or exclude persons from their places of business in the same manner as might the owner of a private home. Sykes alleged that the law remained on the statute books "unjustly, cruelly, wantonly, without just cause or provocation, and in violation of the common law and the laws of the general government." When the anti-segregation bill failed, the four Negroes issued a protest in which they condemned the law of 1875 and asserted that "four hundred thousand citizens are citizens *de jure*, but are aliens *de facto* and entitled to no rights that the railroads, hotels, and theaters are bound to respect." Late in the session a compromise measure was passed which provided that all railroads should furnish separate but equal facilities for Negroes. Specifically, the law required "separate cars, or portions of cars cut off by partition walls, in which all colored passengers who pay first class passenger rates of fare, may have the privilege to enter and occupy . . ." Sykes and Norris voted against the measure, Boyd was absent, and Cassels was recorded as present and not voting.<sup>29</sup>

Boyd returned in 1883 and was joined by Samuel A. McElwee of Haywood County and D. F. Rivers of Fayette County. McElwee, a Fisk University graduate and lawyer, was the most capable of the three and returned to the house in 1885 and 1887. Boyd presented a bill to end segregation on railroads, but it, like the measure of 1881, met defeat. In 1885 McElwee was joined by Greene E. Evans and W. A. Fields of Shelby County, and William C. Hodge of Hamilton County. He became a candidate for speaker of the house and polled thirty-two votes out of ninety-three. In 1885 Evans sought to end segregation in the public carriers, but his proposal did not get beyond the committee room. By this time it must have occurred to even the most zealous liberal leaders that so far as the state of Tennessee was concerned, integration on the public carriers was a dead issue—at least for a while.<sup>30</sup>

The zenith of the Negro lawmakers was reached in the 1885 assembly. As mentioned, only McElwee was returned in 1887, and he became the last Negro to serve in the General Assembly to date (1960).<sup>\*31</sup>

*Industry and Agriculture*—The pragmatic captains of industry came to regard the Civil War as but a clash of economic systems and Appomattox as a symbol of defeat for a decaying order in the South. To them, the Old South of slavery and secession was dead, and upon its grave a New South of industry and com-

\* J. M. H. Graham, a Clarksville Negro, was elected from Montgomery County in 1896, but he was disqualified by the house members when they determined that he had not complied with the residence requirements before his election. *Clarksville Daily Leaf-Chronicle*, November 4, 11, 14, 1896, January 1, 1897; *House Journal*, 1897, pp. 7, 68, 191-97.

merce must be constructed. Weaving together the humanitarian and materialistic motives which characterized American imperialistic ventures into the Pacific at the end of the century, they sought to establish in the South a system comparable to that in the victorious North. They were joined by numerous articulate supporters of the New South philosophy in Tennessee and throughout the South.<sup>32</sup>

Although the Volunteer State remained primarily agricultural to the end of the century, proponents of industrialization became quite active during the three decades following the war. Scarcely had the noise of battle ceased when the urban press began a campaign for industry and "economic carpetbaggers." Colonel A. S. Colyar of Nashville, Judge James E. Bailey of Clarksville, Joseph B. Killebrew of Nashville and various others proclaimed from the rostrum the virtues of materialism. Typical of the press statements was one appearing in the *Chattanooga Daily Republican*:

The people of Chattanooga, no longer wishing to stay in the background, and feeling the necessity of immediately developing the vast mineral resources surrounding them, . . . extend a GENERAL INVITATION to all CARPET-BAGGERS to leave the bleak winds of the North and come to CHATTANOOGA . . . .

Those who wish to come can be assured that they will NOT BE REQUIRED TO RENOUNCE THEIR POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS TENETS . . . .<sup>33</sup>

Newspaper editors frequently admonished their readers for their continuing sectional animosities and urged them to forgive and forget, lest Northern businessmen and laborers be frightened away.<sup>34</sup>

While Northern capital did not flow into the state in the proportions which some Tennesseans hoped, still fortune seekers from the North established many industries. Withing two months after Appomattox a number of companies received charters. Among them were the Tennessee and Kentucky Petroleum, Mining, and Manufacturing Company; the East Tennessee Union Petroleum, Coal, Iron, and Salt Company; the Tennessee Mountain Petroleum and Mining Company; the New York and Tennessee Petroleum and Mining Company; and the Tennessee Mining and Manufacturing Company.<sup>35</sup>

Urban areas—particularly Knoxville and Chattanooga—attracted Northern money, although some industrialists built their factories in smaller counties. The Knoxville Industrial Association, organized soon after the war, became a vigorous proponent of industry. Although in 1868 members of the group complained because their city did not get its "fair share" of Yankee capital, statistics show that by the following year one-sixth of the business properties of Knoxville were owned by Northern businessmen. By that date the Knoxville Iron Company, which included a rolling mill, a foundry, a machine shop, a nail mill, and

a railroad spike machine had been established by a Federal officer; many other factories produced soap, flour, paper, and a variety of products. According to a Richmond, Virginia, newspaper, in 1871, "no city of the south except Atlanta" had "improved more rapidly since the war."<sup>36</sup>

Chattanooga grew even more rapidly than Knoxville. Although the main (Market) street may have been a "mudhole" as late as 1868, conditions improved rapidly. The twenty-two small industries which in 1860 had employed 214 men no longer represented a true picture of industrial Chattanooga; by 1870 fifty-eight industrial establishments employed 1,850 workers. By that date J. T. Wilder, "the greatest of the carpetbaggers," and Colonel S. B. Lowe, had returned to Chattanooga. Wilder established the Roane Iron Company in Roane County and brought into the thriving business a defunct rolling mill of Chattanooga. In 1878 the Roane company made use of the first open hearth furnace south of the Ohio River. Colonel Lowe established the Vulcan Iron Works. The editor of the Chattanooga *Daily Times* noted the progress with pride and wrote that

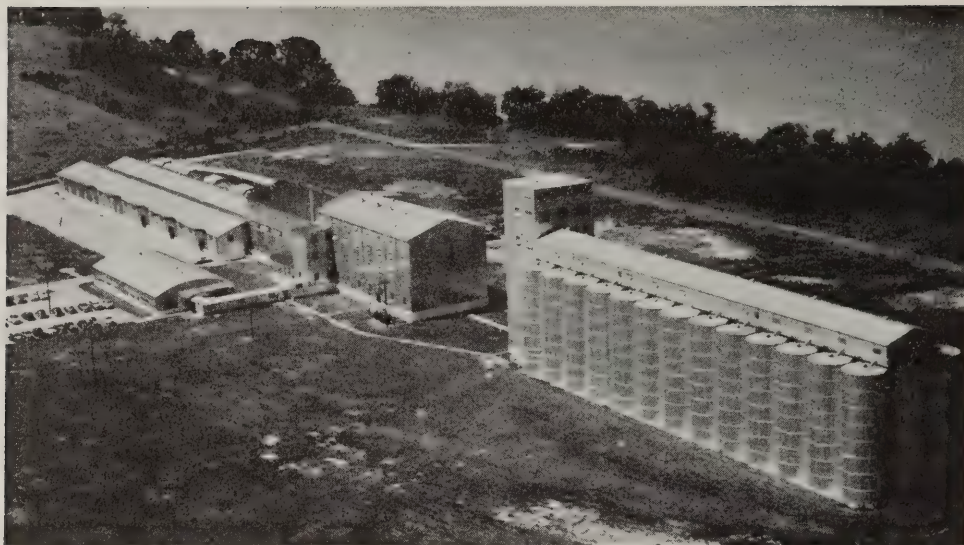
the frozen fingers of the North have been layed [*sic*] in the warm palms of the South, and a healthful, invigorating temperature pervades them both as one body. They are moving in united thought—united action, placing wherever they tread some monument of their skill, industry, and patriotism, and garlanding the nation with their intelligence and virtue.<sup>37</sup>

Furniture factories, sawmills, gristmills, and many other factories had been established by 1883, but the iron works predominated.<sup>38</sup>

Memphians and Nashvillians of course joined in the search for industry. The Memphis Chamber of Commerce was reorganized in 1865 and immediately began a campaign for industry. Soon a "rush and roar of business" prompted a visitor from Kentucky to predict that the river town soon would surpass St. Louis as a manufacturing and commercial center. By 1870 the town had many business establishments and became the greatest processor of cotton seed in the Union. The yellow fever scourge\* which threatened to decimate the population during the 1870's hindered the growth of the city considerably and caused it to lag behind the other three major cities in industrial growth. By 1880, however, the worst of the dread disease was over, and Memphis again moved forward industrially. By 1869 Nashvillians could point to new liquor distilleries, sawmills, paper mills, gristmills, stove factories, and an oil refinery. A few years later the Nashville Woolen Mill Company was organized. The rapid development surprised a Northern visitor who wrote, among other things, about the "brisk" cotton market in the capital city. In 1883 a Nashville editor pro-

\* For an account of yellow fever epidemics in Memphis, see Gerald M. Capers, Jr., "Yellow Fever in Memphis in the 1870's," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXIV (March, 1938), 483-502; see also Alex C. Ewell to Wm. D. Somers, October 10, 1873, in William D. Somers Papers, Flowers Collection, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina.





(Courtesy Industrial Committee of 100)

*Chattanooga—Quaker Oats Company Plant*

phesied industrial greatness for the city, and urged the people to discover the "road to wealth" and happiness through "the workshop, the factory, the foundry, and the iron and coal beds."<sup>39</sup>

Manufacturing plants of various sizes were opened in other counties and towns. Immediately after the war Julius Eckhardt Raht returned to his East Tennessee copper mines and opened offices in Cleveland. The Jackson Flouring Mills were built in Jackson in 1868, and the Jackson Woolen Manufacturing Company began operation a few years later. By 1880 Tullahoma had one of the largest woolen mills in the state.<sup>40</sup>

The industrial growth had been rapid. By 1870 the value of manufactured goods for the state had increased nearly twofold over that of 1860; the number of plant units had increased from 2,500 to 5,300, and the number of industrial workers from 12,500 to 19,400. Development was arrested for a few years after the Panic of 1873. The Vulcan Iron Works of Chattanooga, for example, went into the hands of receivers in 1874 and was sold by order of the chancery court in 1875. By the end of the decade, however, more people were employed than in 1870. Some plants had been consolidated and others had not reopened so that only about four thousand factories were in operation in that year; however, 22,445 people found employment in them. About one-fourth of the plants were grist and flour mills, but carriage and wagon shops flourished, as did tobacco and whisky manufacturing establishments.<sup>41</sup>

While leaders of the New South movement sought industry, many rural

people quietly beat their swords into plowshares. Joseph B. Killebrew, secretary of the Bureau of Agriculture of Tennessee, made an extensive study of agriculture and labor during the early 1870's and found Tennessee farmers in fairly good condition. In West Tennessee people cultivated cotton profitably; they "cared for nothing so much as to see . . . [their] cotton fields flourishing," he wrote. Memphis was the thriving cotton center and experienced in 1870 the greatest volume of sales since 1860. Although cotton sold for fourteen and three-eighths cents per pound—the lowest since the war—West Tennesseans apparently did not become discouraged. Middle Tennesseans grew a variety of crops, including cotton, corn, tobacco, potatoes, and peanuts. East Tennesseans also grew a variety of crops and livestock.<sup>42</sup>

Hard times, falling prices, and an unsatisfactory credit system eventually drove many farmers into bankruptcy and tenancy. By the end of the century cotton reached an all-time low of four and three-fourths cents on the New Orleans market, and other crops—corn, tobacco and wheat—had declined accordingly. Cotton production declined as farmers who remained on the soil shifted to livestock and greater diversification. Many of them, however, faced by the stark realities, lost confidence in the economic god of their fathers, and sought jobs in the nearby plants and factories.<sup>43</sup>

*Immigration*—Leaders of the New South movement who saw in the agrarian system an incubus which prevented Tennessee from taking its rightful place in the economic structure of the nation made a strong bid for immigrants; they sought Yankees and foreigners with equal interest. Parson Brownlow, the scourge of foreigners and Catholics in the 1850's, strongly courted immigrants during his years as governor. Farmers in a state agricultural convention held at Nashville in 1873 deplored Negro "laziness and unreliability" and called for Northern immigrants.

Leaders of the press literally begged for new settlers. The editor of the *Knoxville Daily Press and Herald*, for example, observed that both Negroes and many native whites made poor industrial workers. He urged that they make way for "intelligent labor" from the North. Editors of the Nashville and Chattanooga papers almost daily cried for immigrants. A correspondent for a Paris, Tennessee, paper deplored the fact that state officials "were idle" while "hundreds of thrifty immigrants are pouring into other and more uninviting localities."<sup>44</sup>

State officials, however, were not idle. In 1867 Hermann Bokum, an East Tennessee Unionist, was commissioned to compose a "handbook" advertising the economic potentialities of the state. The book, published in 1868, contained messages both to Tennesseans and to prospective residents. European farmers and laborers, Bokum wrote, had constituted the backbone of the world's economic advancement; Tennessee and the South would continue to remain behind unless they obtained outside capital, labor, and technical skill. To prospec-



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Gallatin—Yale & Towne Plant*

tive residents, Tennessee was depicted as an area of virgin timber and minerals, cheap land and fertile soil, and peace-loving and hard-working people. In the same year William Darby's *Emigrant's Guide*—a small book which presented an exaggerated picture of the industrial and agricultural potentialities of the state—was published. At Brownlow's insistence, legislators appointed standing committees on immigration and established a state board of immigration. Democrats who came into power in 1870, as their Republican predecessors, anxiously tried to attract immigrants, and their brochures contained as many, if not more, exaggerations. Governor James D. Porter, for example, in 1877 told a Philadelphia audience that Tennessee had "mountains of iron and coal, with no one to work them; an absence of muscle as well as capital." He urged the "dissatisfied sons of Pennsylvania" not to go West, "but South."<sup>45</sup>

Although people came from such European countries as Prussia, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and from such Northern states as Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin, and Connecticut, their number was small. The census of 1870, for example, shows that less than two per cent of the population was foreign born, and that the number of foreigners in Tennessee in that year was actually less than the number in 1860.<sup>46</sup>

Colyar, Bailey, Killebrew, John Moffat (secretary of the Tennessee Immigration and Labor Association), and other New South men apparently did not become discouraged; throughout the period they wrote and spoke of the golden opportunities which awaited immigrants and industry. When realists pointed to the small number of immigrants, the Tennessee industrialists always offered hope. Much was made of a letter written by a Minnesotan in 1875 in which the writer



purported to speak for many Northern immigrants: "We are coming, fifty thousand men! Not in hostile array, but with plows and spades, . . . and skilled labor and with capital to . . . develop your mighty resources." In 1881 Killebrew answered critics by asserting that thousand of skilled artisans and workers from England and Ireland were on the verge of coming to the New World. He was confident that the British iron and coal deposits were exhausted and that the exodus of workers was imminent.<sup>47</sup>

Although the immigrants did not come in the numbers expected, the influx of Northern capital was of great benefit to the state and offered employment to many Tennesseans.

## CHAPTER XXX—NOTES

1. Biographical data for the members may be found in a variety of sources. George W. Stanbery, II, has sketched the life of each member in his "The Tennessee Constitutional Convention of 1870" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1940), and Thomas B. Alexander has furnished information on twenty-one of the more prominent members in his *Political Reconstruction in Tennessee*, 231-33. Very brief sketches of all members may be found in Joseph S. Carels' Autograph Books, Tennessee Historical Society Collection, State Library, Nashville. See also Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 653.
2. *Ibid.*, 654; Verton M. Queener, "A Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism, 1867-1876," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 14 (1942), 73; *Nashville Union and American*, January 2, 1870; Alexander, *Political Reconstruction*, 235.
3. *Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention of Delegates Elected . . . to Amend, Revise, or Form and Make a New Constitution for the State* (Nashville, 1870), 41-43, cited hereinafter as *Journal*; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 654.
4. Wallace McClure, "The Development of the Tennessee Constitution," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (1915), 312-13; *Journal*, 30-32, 92, 97-99, 330-33, 398-99; Stanbery, "Tennessee Constitutional Convention," 60 ff.; *Nashville Union and American*, January 27, February 5, 1870; Carels' Autograph Books, pages unnumbered.
5. *Union and American*, January 27, 1870; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 655.
6. *Journal*, 178-81, 397-98; Frank B. Williams, "The Poll Tax as a Suffrage Requirement in the South, 1870-1901" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1950), 76, 86; Memphis *Avalanche*, quoted in *Nashville Republican Banner*, January 30, 1870; *Ibid.*, January 29, January 30, March 15, 1870.
7. *Union and American*, March 11, 1870; Corlew, "Negro in Tennessee," 117-18. A few months later Brownlow wrote to John Eaton, United States commissioner of education who had been state superintendent of schools under Brownlow, to warn against "dangerous, desperate, Democrats," not only in Tennessee, but in the entire South. LeRoy P. Graf (ed.), "Parson Brownlow's Fears: A Letter About the Dangerous, Desperate, Democrats," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 25 (1953), 111-14.
8. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 657; Alexander, *Political Reconstruction*, 233; Nimrod Porter's Diary, March 28, 1870, in Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

9. Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 73, 84, 85; "The East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party, 1870-1896," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 15 (1943), 49 ff.; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 675; Alexander, *Political Reconstruction*, 123, 142 ff.
10. Clyde Ball, "The Public Career of Colonel A. S. Colyar, 1870-1877," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XII (March, June, September, 1953), 41-47, 106-12; Margaret Butler, "The Life of John C. Brown" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1936), 45 ff.; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 657, 676; Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 74; *Senate Journal*, 1871, p. 18; Alexander, *Political Reconstruction*, 224.
11. Stanley J. Folmsbee, *East Tennessee University, 1840-1879, Predecessor of the University of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1959), 35; Alexander, T. A. R. Nelson, 158-65; Kenneth McKellar, *Tennessee Senators, as Seen by One of Their Successors* (Kingsport, 1942), 311; Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 78; Stryker, *Andrew Johnson*, 803-94.
12. *House Journal*, 1873, p. 48; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 680; Milton, *Age of Hate*, 665; Butler, "John C. Brown," 62; Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 75; Ball, "Colonel A. S. Colyar," 227; *Knoxville Daily Press and Herald*, September 5, November 8, 1872.
13. Queener, "Decade of East Tennessee Republicanism," 75, 84; *Congressional Record*, 43 Cong., 1874, pp. 101, 1870, 2013; *Knoxville Daily Press and Herald*, April 4, 1869; Mary Ozelle Bible, "The Post Presidential Career of Andrew Johnson" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1936), 11, 13 ff., 22; *Union and American*, October 23, 1869.
14. Milton, *Age of Hate*, 658-60; *House Journal*, 1875, p. 201; *Senate Journal*, 1875, pp. 209-10; Ball, "Colonel A. S. Colyar," 233-34; Butler, "John C. Brown," 55; *Union and American*, January 27, 1875; *Congressional Record*, 44 Cong., 1 sess. and special sess., 123-27; Stryker, *Andrew Johnson*, 822; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 681; Milton, *Age of Hate*, 658-60.
15. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 682; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 54; Charles R. Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes* (5 vols., Columbus, 1922-1926), III, 417; Albert V. House, Jr., "President Hayes' Selection of David M. Key for Postmaster General," *Journal of Southern History*, IV (February, 1938), 87, 89.
16. *Nashville Daily American*, May 7, 1876; Ball, "Colonel A. S. Colyar," 120.
17. James E. Thorogood, *A Financial History of Tennessee Since 1870* (Sewanee, 1949), 215; Ball, "Colonel A. S. Colyar," 121; Daniel M. Robison, *Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee* (Chapel Hill, 1935), 20; *House Journal*, Appendix, 1865-66, p. 66; *Public Acts*, 1847-48, Chap. LXXIX, 127; 1855-56, Chap. XCV, 105-08; Chap. XCVI, 108-09; William A. Stanton, "The State Debt in Tennessee Politics" (M.A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1939), 1-7.
18. *Union and American*, 1874; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 20; Lynn, "Tennessee's Public Debt," 8; Ball, "Colonel A. S. Colyar," 123; Park Marshall, *A Life of William B. Bate, Citizen, Soldier, and Statesman* (Nashville, 1908), 203.
19. *Union and American*, May 15, 1874; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 682-83; *Senate Journal*, 1877, pp. 41-2; *House Journal*, extra sess., 1877, pp. 6, 30-35; Thorogood, *Financial History of Tennessee*, 217-218; Lynn, "Tennessee's Public Debt" 19 ff.; Stanton, "State Debt," 58 ff.
20. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 684; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 84; Lynn, "Tennessee's Public Debt," 34.
21. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 686; McGee, *History of Tennessee*, 241; Thorogood, *Financial History of Tennessee*, 219; *Public Acts*, 1879, Chap. CCIV, 247-49.

22. *Ibid.*, 234; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 687-88; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 54-55; *Nashville American*, October 31, 1880.
23. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 689; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 55; *Lynn and Others vs. Polk*, 76 Tenn. 122; *Public Acts*, 1881, Chap. CLXXIII, 279-82.
24. Thorogood, *Financial History of Tennessee*, 220; *Public Acts*, 3 extra sess., 1882, Chap. IV, 6-10.
25. Marshall, *Bate*, 220; G. R. Farnum, "William B. Bate, Soldier of Dixie, Lawyer, and Statesman of the Union," *American Bar Association Journal*, XXX (February, 1944), 104-05; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 21; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 55; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 690.
26. Thorogood, *Financial History of Tennessee*, 220-21; *Public Acts*, 1883, Chap. LXXXIV, 76-84; Marshall, *Bate*, 220.
27. *Nashville Bulletin*, December 12, 1872; *Daily Press and Times*, April 7, 1869; *Pulaski Citizen*, March 27, 1871; John B. Brownlow to Oliver H. Temple, January 10, 1897, in Temple Papers, University of Tennessee Library, Knoxville; *House Journal*, 1873, pp. 227, 429. Henry A. Chambers, representative from Madisonville, noted in his diary that he attended the governor's banquet but he made no mention of Keeble. Henry A. Chambers' Diary, 1872, in Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
28. Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 324-25; *Knoxville Daily Chronicle*, January 18, 1872; *Daily Memphis Avalanche*, September 8, 9, 1876; *Daily American*, September 5, 1876; Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.
29. *Clarksville Daily Leaf-Chronicle*, November 4, 11, 14, 1896; *House Journal*, 1897, pp. 7, 68, 191-97; 1881, pp. 89, 573, 723-26, 840-41; *Public Acts*, 1875, Chap. CXXX, 216-17; Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The Origin of the First 'Jim Crow' Law," *Journal of Southern History*, XV (May, 1949), 236-37, 239.
30. Monroe N. Work (comp.), "Some Negro Members of Reconstruction Conventions and Legislatures and of Congress," *Journal of Negro History*, V (January, 1920), 114; *House Journal*, 1883, pp. 514, 548, 812; 1885, pp. 7, 121-22, 198, 293, 359, 372.
31. *Ibid.*, 1887, p. 539.
32. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 205; Claude G. Bowers has written of the period: "A new order had been established . . . . The Jeffersonian Republic that came in with the revolution of 1800 gave way to the Hamiltonian Republic brought in by the counter-revolution of 1865-76 . . . . The age-old fight would continue, the spirits of Jefferson and Hamilton leading as before, but the advantage, under the new order, had passed to the latter." *The Tragic Era* (Cambridge, 1929), 538.
33. Quoted in Livingood, "Chattanooga," 40.
34. *Knoxville Chronicle*, December 13, 1877, January 30, 1880; *Chattanooga Daily Times*, September 30, 1877; *Daily American*, August 31, 1875; Constantine G. Belissary, "The Rise of Industry and the Industrial Spirit in Tennessee, 1865-1885," *Journal of Southern History*, XIX (May, 1953), 197; W. B. Hessletine, "Tennessee's Invitation to Carpet-Baggers," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 4 (1932), 105; *Daily American*, January 2, 1883.
35. *Public Acts*, 1865, Chap. XIX, 91-93; Chap. XXII, 96-97; Chap. XXIII, 97-99; Chap. XXIV, 103-05; Chap. XXVI, 121-23.
36. Campbell, "East Tennessee During the Radical Regime," 93; Rothrock (ed.), *French Broad-Holston Country*, 222-23; *Richmond Whig*, quoted in *ibid.*, 220-21; Rule, *Knoxville*, Chapters XI and XII.
37. *Chattanooga Daily Times*, September 30, 1877.



38. Victor S. Clark, *History of Manufacturing in the United States* (3 vols., New York, 1929), II, 240; Campbell, "East Tennessee During the Radical Regime," 94; Livingood, "Chattanooga," 46.
39. Capers, *River Town*, 185; William D. Miller, "J. J. Williams and the Memphis Movement," *W.T.H.S. Papers*, V (1951), 14; Lois D. Bejach, "The Seven Cities Absorbed by Memphis," *ibid.*, VIII (1954), 95-103; Robert Somers, *The Southern States Since the Civil War, 1870-1871* (New York, 1871), 271; W. W. Clayton, *History of Davidson County, Tennessee* (Philadelphia, 1880), 219; *Daily American*, January 2, 1883.
40. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 874-75; R. E. Barclay, *Ducktown: Back in Rabt's Time* (Chapel Hill, 1946), 129; Clayton, *Davidson County*, 221.
41. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 873.
42. Joseph B. Killebrew, *Introduction to the Resources of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1874), 359 (misnumbered 559), 1027, 1164; *Union and American*, September 29, 1870; *Ninth Census*, 1870, *Industry and Wealth*, 243-44; James E. Boyle, *Cotton and the New Orleans Exchange: A Century of Commercial Revolution* (New York, 1934), 181; Theodore Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture and the Problems of Readjustment, 1865-1877," *Agricultural History*, XXX (April, 1956), 58-59.
43. Boyle, *Cotton and the New Orleans Exchange*, 173, 185; Belissary, "Industry in Tennessee," 199; *Eleventh Census*, 1890, *Agriculture*, 183, 391, 433, 489, 572.
44. *Knoxville Daily Press and Herald*, September 14, 1872; *Paris Intelligencer*, April 29, 1875; Rowland T. Berthoff, "Southern Attitudes Toward Immigration, 1865-1914," *Journal of Southern History*, XVII (August, 1951), 329.
45. Constantine G. Belissary, "Tennessee and Immigration, 1865-1880," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, VII (September, 1948), 233-34; Hesselstine, "Tennessee's Invitation to Carpet-Baggers," 108-09; Bokum, *The Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide . . .* (Philadelphia, 1868), 104, *et passim.*; Darby, *The Emigrant's Guide* (New York, 1868), *passim.*; *Daily American*, September 4, 1877.
46. *Ninth Census*, 1870, *Population*, I, 321; Saloutos, "Southern Agriculture," 60.
47. *Pulaski Citizen*, July 29, 1875; *House and Senate Journals*, 1881, Biennial Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture, 10.

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## CHAPTER XXXI

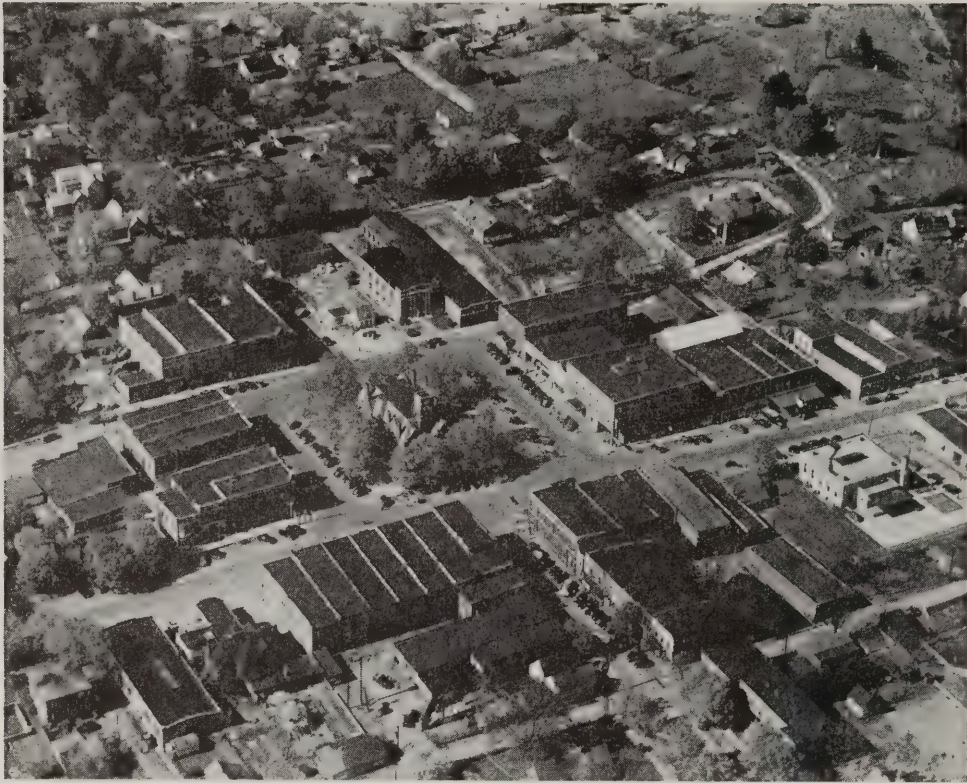
### *The Agrarian Revolt*

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE STATE DEBT was Governor Bate's outstanding accomplishment during his first term. Although the industrial wing of his party blamed him for repudiating part of the debt and rural Democrats believed he had honored fraudulent bonds, the majority of Tennesseans were pleased that he had settled a question which had plagued the state for over a decade. The former Confederate general's personal popularity enabled him in 1884 to defeat Frank T. Reid, of Nashville, the Republican gubernatorial candidate, but the election returns clearly indicated that the breach in the Democratic party had not been completely healed. Despite the Democratic victory in the presidential election, Bate's majority in Tennessee was reduced from nearly 30,000 (in 1882) to 7,000.\* Also discouraging to the Democratic leaders was the election of Republicans to the recently established railroad commission. Industrialists in the Democratic party bitterly resented the law which in 1883 had established a commission with power to regulate railroads in the state. In 1884 some of them probably voted for Republicans rather than "machine Democrats," which accounted partly for the Republican domination of the commission. The fact that during Bate's second administration industrialists brought about successful repeal of the regulatory act only after a bitter legislative fight and over the governor's veto, caused wider rents to appear in the Democratic fabric.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, even after the settlement of the debt question, at least four powerful political groups were evident; three were factions within the Democratic party, and the fourth was the Republican party. In addition, other groups associated with the agrarian movement appeared. One of the Democratic factions had formed during the slavery controversy and consisted of those who followed John C. Calhoun's doctrine of state sovereignty. Although evident as early as the 1830's, the influence of the group had been minimized by the nationalism of Jackson and Polk until the gubernatorial accession of Isham G. Harris and the secession movement which followed. During the 1860's the group went into temporary eclipse, but the return of Democrats to power in 1870 brought them again to the forefront. Having within their ranks the vast majority of the former

\* Final returns indicated that Bate received 132,201 votes to Reid's 125,246. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

### *Sparta*

Confederates and, being able generally to control the party machinery, they often were called "Bourbons" and "the machine crowd." To Andrew Johnson, however, who was able temporarily to interrupt their influence during the early 1870's, they always were "the damned brigadiers." Former Governor Harris, who was elected to the United States Senate in 1877, secured and retained undisputed control of the group until his death two decades later.<sup>2</sup>

A second faction was composed of extremely conservative industrialists who had within their ranks most proponents of the New South philosophy. They agreed with the Republicans on a few matters, especially that of industrialism, and this condition won for them the name "Mugwumps." Although relatively small in number, they exerted an influence disproportionate to their size because of the enormity of their resources. Also, their inclination toward some of the Republican policies enabled them oftentimes to bargain with the machine crowd if their counsel and wants went unheeded. During the period they looked for leadership to Colonel Arthur S. Colyar, Nashville industrialist,



lawyer, newspaper publisher, and politician, who had organized the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company. The group, composed almost entirely of old-line Whigs, had, over the last two decades, been driven into the Democratic party by various factors, including the Lincoln policies, the war, Reconstruction, and the race question.<sup>3</sup>

The third group, composed of the small-farmer elements—sometimes called the “wool-hat boys”—were descendants of the old Jackson-Polk-Johnson Democrats of an earlier period. These horny-handed sons of toil Andrew Johnson had led to recoup his political fortunes after his retirement from the White House, but his death in 1875 left this segment of the Tennessee Democracy leaderless for a decade despite the fact that it was the oldest and strongest numerically among the factions. Their apathy was such that Harris feared for the future of the party. Then, in 1886, conditions within the party became favorable for the emergence of a new leader. From Happy Valley, in Washington County, came Robert Love Taylor, and the rural element united behind the man whom they fondly called “Our Bob.”<sup>4</sup>

The fourth group was the Republican party. It was composed almost entirely of former Unionists located in the counties which had voted against secession in 1861, but they showed considerable strength throughout the period here considered. Although they were divided into two factions over the control of federal patronage, they showed a remarkable tendency to fight among themselves until election day at which time they would march to the polls and vote together. Such cohesion enabled them to defeat a divided Democracy in the election of 1880. Negro enfranchisement increased the number of Republican voters but the freedmen's demands for a share in the patronage embarrassed the white leaders and resulted in defections among the blacks. Because of his control of federal patronage, L. C. Houk was looked upon as the party leader, but H. Clay Evans, Chattanooga industrialist, had a wide influence, as will be shown later.<sup>5</sup>

Third parties—the Greenback, Prohibition, Agricultural Wheel, Farmers' Alliance, and Populist—made inroads into both the Democratic and Republican parties. In 1890 the agricultural wing of the Democratic party, in league with the Alliance men, elected the governor and controlled the legislature. The inroads made into Republican ranks were far less serious and at no time threatened to break the party hold in the eastern section.<sup>6</sup>

*The War of the Roses*—Lack of harmony within the party, together with the rising threat of Republicanism, led Democrats to cast about for a candidate who could unify the three factions in time for the election of 1886. As the Bate administration continued, the lack of harmony among followers of Harris and Colyar became more pronounced, and the growing apathy of the rural Democracy alarmed party leaders. “Our party needs reorganization. We have been . . . discordant, belligerent, and . . . rent with feuds” which threatened the

party's very existence, Bob Taylor told Nashville friends early in January, 1886. To Taylor and other party leaders a factional truce appeared necessary if the political lifeblood was to continue to flow in Democratic veins. Fortunately, state and national issues were not of sufficient consequence to cause dissension within the party; should they become ominous, serious party leaders were determined to compromise or postpone them in the interest of party harmony. The selection of a candidate resulted in compromise. Young men desired more recognition within the party, and rural voters, perhaps inspired by the agrarian movements in the South and West, could be awakened from their lethargy behind a suitable candidate. As one scholar has written, "the most acceptable candidate would be he who could satisfy the rural voters, the younger generation of Democrats, East Tennessee, and who could conciliate the Harris and Colyar factions."<sup>7</sup>

Thirty-six-year-old Bob Taylor, an East Tennessean who captured the imagination of the young Democrats and the Agrarians, won the nomination on the fifteenth ballot. A man of conciliatory manners who could arouse enthusiasm in the common people, Taylor understood well that his role as head of the state's majority party would be to conciliate opposing factions. Even during the balloting when at one point the convention seemed deadlocked, he had advised friends at the convention that he did "not want the nomination at the cost of bitterness and bad blood." His nomination not only meant better party relations; it also presaged a decline of the influence of the "brigadiers," continuing influence of the young party leaders, and the beginning in Tennessee of the agrarian revolt which was to loom large in state politics for the next decade.<sup>8</sup>

Interestingly, the Republicans had nominated Taylor's brother, Alfred A. Taylor (commonly called "Alf"), seven weeks before the Democratic convention. A man of considerable ability who lacked his brother's personal magnetism, Alf was selected, apparently, to forestall the nomination of Bob, whom Republicans feared. Thus, the nomination of the brothers launched the "War of the Roses," a political tradition among the people of the state even to this day.<sup>9</sup>

Tennesseans always have been infatuated with a colorful political campaign; in 1886 they were not to be disappointed. From the first of the forty-one joint debates, held at Madisonville on September 9, to the balloting on election day, both Democrats and Republicans enjoyed a campaign which attracted nationwide interest. In the same spirit that Whigs and Democrats had donned special uniforms in the campaign of 1844, Democrats and Republicans of 1886 chose the white rose of York and the red rose of Lancaster as their respective emblems. Enormous crowds thronged around the heroes. At Murfreesboro, for example, 3,000 men escorted Bob to his hotel; at Franklin, 8,000 listeners attended the hustings; and at Columbia, a thousand mounted men met the train which brought the candidates into their city.<sup>10</sup>

The bitterness which had characterized many gubernatorial campaigns in past years was almost completely absent. On many occasions the brothers tra-

velled, slept, and ate together. On the platform each defended his party with vigor, but elsewhere they were friendly, jovial brothers. Both were skilled "fiddle" players and both told a variety of stories and anecdotes; the listeners generally agreed, however, that Bob's "unpruned" rhetoric and droll anecdote, his "fiddle," and his charming manner outshone Alf's.\* Issues were pushed into the background. Neither candidate advanced profound arguments and discussions, but the brothers did provide what Daniel M. Robison has termed "a happy interlude" at a time when party and factional strife, to say nothing of racial and sectional bitterness, still clouded the memories of many people.<sup>11</sup>

Bob's popularity with the rural masses enabled him to defeat Alf by a majority of over 16,000 votes.\*\* While the victory was by no means a landslide, the margin was more than twice that of Bate's two years earlier, thus attesting to Taylor's ability as a party conciliator. For the next decade his most useful role in the Democratic party was to be that of pouring oil on the troubled factional waters of his party.<sup>12</sup>

Although the new governor's appeal was directed almost entirely to the rural folk and to people of little accomplishment, he was of distinguished parentage. His great-grandfather, General Nathaniel Green Taylor, had served with Jackson in the War of 1812; his grandfather, James P. Taylor, was a prominent lawyer and attorney general of East Tennessee. His father, "Nat" Taylor, was a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, a prominent Whig, a two-term Congressman, and a Bell elector in 1860. His maternal ancestry also was prominent. His mother's father, David Haynes, was a farmer and businessman, and his uncle, Landon C. Haynes, was a prominent lawyer and Confederate Senator. Although his father and brother became conservative Republicans after the war, Bob Taylor early in life espoused the Democratic cause. Licensed to practice law in 1878, Bob entered the political arena immediately and was elected to Congress from a strongly Republican district. Although defeated in 1880, his two campaigns had caught the eyes of Democratic leaders throughout the state, and for the next four years he was mentioned prominently as a United States senatorial possibility and as a gubernatorial candidate. In 1885 President

\* Many stories amused the audiences. Bob on one occasion found Alf's speech (some people claimed that their father, Nat, wrote the addresses for both sons) and committed it to memory. When the brothers met on the platform the following day, Bob, speaking first delivered Alf's speech. The embarrassed and chagrined Alf hastily had to construct a new one.

Many stories centered around "fiddle" playing. Still told in Happy Valley is the story of Bob's tale of a paroled convict who returned unexpectedly to his mountain home after a two-year stay in the penitentiary to find his wife tending her three-month-old baby. The parolee said nothing but merely took from beneath his coat a "fiddle" on which he played, "Who's Been Here Since I've Been Gone."

\*\* The final results were: Robert L. Taylor, 126,151 votes; Alfred A. Taylor, 109,837. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 170.



Cleveland appointed him to the position of pension agent at Knoxville, where he worked until his election the next year.<sup>13</sup>

Despite formidable opposition, Taylor received the Democratic nomination again in 1888, and defeated Republican candidate Samuel W. Hawkins and Prohibition candidate J. C. Johnson. Taylor's stand on the Blair Bill, a measure which would provide federal aid to education, proved to be the major issue in the contest. Although Senator Howell E. Jackson and several members of the House supported the bill, most Tennesseans agreed with other Southerners that federal aid would result in federal-controlled and integrated schools. Therefore, when Taylor expressed mild approbation of the measure a storm of protest arose. Cumberland University students burned him in effigy at Lebanon, and editors of opposition newspapers decried his alleged apostasy to Southern Democracy. Consequently, not until after six days of wrangling and forty ballots did Taylor overcome the opposition of the state's rights wing and receive the Democratic nomination. The campaign was colorless and listless in contrast to the preceding one, and Taylor received a majority slightly larger than that of 1886.\*<sup>14</sup>

The Taylor administrations were not remembered for profound or far-reaching legislation, but several laws were enacted which should not go unnoticed. Among the measures of a constructive nature were four designed to preserve the purity of the ballot box, facilitate honest elections, and raise revenue for schools. One, the Dortch Law, provided that in the more populous counties and cities voters should mark printed ballots in secrecy unless blind or otherwise physically disabled. The second, sometimes referred to as Myer's Registration Law, provided for registration of voters in cities, towns, and civil districts having a voting population of 500 or more. A third, the Lea Election Law, was designed to avoid federal interference in state elections. It provided for separate ballot boxes and election officials in contests for state and federal offices. A fourth law, enacted in a special session held early in 1890, provided for a poll tax. Governor Taylor, State Superintendent of Public Education Frank M. Smith, and others interested in schools, were especially active in getting the bill enacted. Taylor did not disappear from the political scene after the expiration of his second term. His counsel continued to be sought by party leaders, especially in 1896 when it seemed that once again the Democracy might be dashed to pieces on the rocks of factionalism. He returned in that year to serve another term as governor.<sup>15</sup>

*The Agrarian Movement*—As discussed in an earlier chapter, farmers of the South and West did not relinquish willingly their position of leadership at the nation's economic table. When each year brought rising costs of production but falling prices for farm products, vigorous leaders organized the farmers

\* The final count was Taylor, 156,799 votes; Hawkins, 139,014; and Johnson, 6,893. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 257.

against an alleged conspiracy. While Tennessee, with diversified agriculture and a relatively small Negro population, differed somewhat from the deep South and the West, the effect of the agrarian movement was felt strongly in the state.

The first farm organization of note was formed soon after the war by Oliver Hudson Kelley. An employee of the Department of Agriculture, Kelley called it the "Patrons of Husbandry," but the organization was better known simply as the "Grange." "Its grand object is not only general improvement in husbandry," Kelley announced, "but to increase the general happiness, wealth, and prosperity of the country." Soon it spread to the South and West, so that by the early 1870's Tennessee had over one thousand chapters.<sup>16</sup>

Other agrarian movements followed closely on the heels of the Grange. The Greenback movement was next to appear in the state. In contrast to the Grange this party was political in nature. Greenback leaders nominated a candidate for each gubernatorial election from 1874 to 1884 (except in 1876) but did not muster sufficient strength to affect materially the outcome of the contests. The National Agricultural Wheel appeared in the state in 1884, and three years later the Farmers' Alliance was established. Both groups grew rapidly, especially in the central and western counties. In December, 1888, the national organizations of the Wheel and the Southern Alliance united under the name of "Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America." In July, 1889, members of the two groups in Tennessee met in Nashville and united under the name of "Farmers' Alliance." The organization consisted primarily of farmers, but also included "others closely associated with farmers," such as rural mechanics, teachers, physicians, ministers, and editors of agricultural papers. In 1890 Alliance leaders claimed a membership of over 100,000, and openly sought to capture working control of the Democratic party; their voting strength, however, probably was less than one-half that number.<sup>17</sup>

In view of the organization's strength and purpose it was only natural that the leaders should look with increasing interest to the election of 1890. John P. Buchanan, of Rutherford County, was the first president of the Tennessee Alliance, and in 1889 he became president of the combined Wheel and Alliance. The real power, however, lay with John H. "Jehazy"\* McDowell, of Obion County, who was a vice president of the Southern branch of the Alliance and also editor of a Nashville publication called *The Toiler*, which served as the mouthpiece of the Alliance men. When Democrats assembled for their gubernatorial convention on July 15, 1890, McDowell already had publicized widely his intention to secure the nomination for Buchanan.<sup>18</sup>

Three parties chose candidates. Within the Democracy, the Bourbon wing supported Josiah Patterson of Memphis, and the Colyar faction pushed forward Jere Baxter of Nashville. As in 1886, however, the rural element carried

\* McDowell's enemies sought to discredit him by alleging that during the Reconstruction period in Arkansas he had fraternized freely with Negroes and carpet-baggers, and had dined with an Arkansas Negro named Jehazy Cole.



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Federal Building*

the day, and Buchanan was chosen on the twenty-sixth ballot after three days of voting. Buchanan assured those who feared his alignment with a new third party that he would maintain "the great principles of Democracy as enunciated by Jackson, Polk, and Johnson." The adoption of a conservative platform suitable to the Alliance men closed the Democratic convention. The Republicans chose Lewis T. Baxter, Nashville banker and businessman. Their support of the Lodge Force Bill—the spiritual successor of the Sumner Force Bill mentioned in an earlier chapter—despite the protests of Baxter, insured the defeat of their candidate. Prohibitionists nominated D. C. Kelly, a Methodist preacher who had had a varied career.<sup>19</sup>

Although not vigorously supported by the Bourbons and Mugwumps, Buchanan won by a substantial majority.\* His supporters—the "Hayseeds,"

\* The official vote count was: Buchanan, 113,549; Baxter, 76,081, and Kelly, 11,082. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 278-80.



as their enemies called them—were jubilant, especially after it became apparent that they also would control the legislature.<sup>20</sup>

Conservative legislation marked the action of the general assembly under Buchanan, and Democrats of all factions expressed general satisfaction over the Democratic-Alliance administration. Several progressive laws came out of this farmer-dominated legislature. One provided for closer regulation of the sale of commercial fertilizers. Another awarded pensions of \$25 per month for totally disabled Confederate veterans and \$8.33 per month for those with minor disabilities. A third modified election laws passed during the Taylor administration.<sup>21</sup>

Buchanan, however, did not possess the personal magnetism of his predecessor and was unable to win his party's nomination in 1892. While the Harris and Colyar factions found nothing to complain about with regard to the administration in general, they never fully "accepted" Buchanan and they always regarded McDowell with suspicion. The Governor's inability to settle the coal miners' insurrections in East Tennessee (to be discussed presently), and his use of state troops in an attempt to handle the situation angered many voters. Other people complained that Buchanan gave lucrative state jobs to Alliance men rather than to old line Democrats. Especially galling was the fact that McDowell accepted an important position but continued as editor of *The Toiler*. Formation of the new Populist party, however, became the wedge which Democrats used to separate Buchanan from his party. Leaders of the new group sought to pull away enough votes from Democrats and Republicans to create a party of sufficient strength to capture the presidential nomination. The thought of leaving the party of the solid South was highly repugnant to old-line Democrats. Although Buchanan asserted that the formation of a third party of agrarians meant "the ruin of the South," none could deny that the movement had a strong appeal to many of the rural leaders, including McDowell. When the Governor refused to break with McDowell, leading Democrats shifted their support to Peter Turney, chief justice of the supreme court. Turney's political star rose rapidly. Buchanan, realizing that he could not win the nomination, withdrew from the contest before the Democratic convention was held and left the field to Turney.<sup>22</sup>

Three other candidates also made the race. Governor Buchanan still had a respectable following among rural Democrats. In August he was "drafted" by Alliance men, Populists, and "Buchanan Democrats"; he then agreed to make the race as an independent candidate. Republicans chose George W. Winstead of Dresden, and Prohibitionists named Edward H. East. The shadow of McDowell continued to fall across Buchanan's path. The Governor was denounced as a tool of the agrarian leader, an advocate of integration, and a destroyer of the Democratic party. More damaging to his bid for reelection as an independent was the report of a "deal" engineered by McDowell between Populists and Republicans. Buchanan's candidacy, according to the allegation, would take

votes from Turney in order to insure a Republican victory; McDowell would receive \$15,000 in cash and Republican support for the United States Senate. Buchanan's vehement denial did not convince many who detested McDowell. Reports of the "deal," together with other rumors of Populist-Republican coalitions, caused many erstwhile Buchanan supporters to break with the Governor and hold to the party line. Consequently, Turney, although he received less than half of the votes cast, was elected,\* and the Bourbons were returned to power. The agrarian movement in Tennessee had reached its height during the Buchanan administration and declined rapidly thereafter.<sup>23</sup>

Peter Turney had enjoyed a distinguished career. The son of Senator Hopkins L. Turney, he had been prominent in politics before the war. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, in 1861 he had urged Tennesseans to secede and had formed a company of volunteers from his native county of Franklin. He served with distinction during the war and actively opposed Brownlow's reconstruction measures after his return to civilian life. Appointed to the supreme court in 1870, Turney became chief justice in 1886, and performed ably until he exchanged the bench for the governor's chair. While his administration offered little of the spectacular, Turney followed a conservative course which in general was satisfactory to party leaders. Consequently, in 1894 he was nominated for a second term because of the relatively little opposition that he aroused and the threat of Republican and Populist fusion.<sup>24</sup>

*The Disputed Election of 1894*—The contest, which ended in a dispute and shook the Democratic party to its foundations, got underway late in August after Republicans chose a Chattanooga industrialist, H. Clay Evans, for the nomination. In addition to managing his extensive business interests in East Tennessee, the Pennsylvania-born industrialist had served four terms as alderman of Chattanooga, two terms as mayor of that city, and one term as Congressman. His support of the "Force Bill" while in Congress cost him reelection in 1890 and 1892 and weakened his appeal in the gubernatorial race of 1894. Democratic leaders recognized him as one of the ablest and most formidable opponents which Republicans could offer. The Populists nominated A. L. Mims, a Davidson County school teacher. Prohibitionists failed to choose a candidate, but they adopted a platform in harmony with that of the Populists.<sup>25</sup>

Turney opened his campaign at Murfreesboro on September 13. The sixty-five-year-old Governor spoke briefly before lunch and resumed his position on the platform after an hour of rest and refreshments. The aged executive became exhausted, however, and was forced to call upon his brother to read the remainder of his speech. Democratic leaders now realized that Turney was too feeble to make an active and energetic campaign; therefore, Edward Ward Carmack, vigorous editor of the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, carried the Gover-

\* The official count gave Turney 126,348 votes; Winstead, 100,577; Buchanan, 29,918, and East, about 500. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 700.

nor's campaign from Memphis to Bristol. Turney's only other oratorical effort was an address to a gathering of laborers in Chattanooga on Labor Day.<sup>26</sup>

The vigorous Evans opened his campaign at Huntingdon on September 5. From that time to his final address at Ashland City on November 5, the industrialist-politician talked his way across the state. He severely indicted President Cleveland for the manner in which he had handled the gold crisis and accused Turney of not knowing how to run the affairs of state "on business principles." The most serious charges the Pennsylvanian had to face were those alleging that he was a carpetbagger and that he had voted while a member of Congress for Henry Cabot Lodge's "Force Bill" which would establish federal jurisdiction over congressional and presidential elections. His inability to counter these charges adequately became important factors in the campaign. In September, state Republican leaders announced that Governor William McKinley of Ohio, former Speaker of the House Thomas B. "Czar" Reed of Maine, and other prominent party members would speak in Tennessee in the interest of Evans' candidacy. Only McKinley came, however, and delivered an address in Chattanooga on October 20. When the campaign closed at the Cheatham County seat on November 5, Republican chances for victory appeared best in over a decade.<sup>27</sup>

Soon after the returns were tabulated, but before the results were announced, Republicans and Democrats agreed that the election was very close. Turney had lost support in the urban-industrial areas of Nashville and Memphis; even in some rural counties he had not polled as many votes as Democrats had expected. Not until December 13, five weeks after the election, did the secretary of state make public the returns. The official count, which showed a small majority for Evans, gave the Republican candidate 105,104 votes; Turney, 104,356; and Mims, 23,088. Republicans claimed the victory, but Democrats contended that fraud could be proved in some of the counties where Evans had polled a majority. Two weeks later Turney issued notice that he would contest the election.<sup>28</sup>

The legislature, dominated by Democrats, assembled on January 5 and promptly selected a "Committee on the Governor's Election." The committee, consisting of seven Democrats and five Republicans, was commanded to study complaints in the disputed contest and make recommendations to the general assembly. After hearing allegations of fraud from both Turney's and Evans' attorneys, the committee in April filed both a majority and a minority report. The majority document, signed by the seven Democrats, declared that many violations of the poll tax law had taken place in counties which Evans carried, and declared that when the fraudulent votes were taken from the returns as originally reported the official count should be Turney, 94,620 votes; Evans, 92,266; and Mims, 23,088. In the minority report the five Republicans questioned the authority of the committee, declared that the seven Democrats showed partiality from the beginning, and alleged that the majority did not seek to develop the



whole truth. The contest, they believed, was as fair as any ever held in Tennessee and the returns as originally reported should stand. On May 4, the members of the joint assembly voted 70 to 57 in favor of accepting the majority report. Consequently, Governor Turney took the oath of office for a second term on May 8.<sup>29</sup>

Although Evans lost the governorship, he emerged a hero and a martyr to Republican leaders. He enjoyed an Evans-for-Vice President boom, and when the National Republican Convention assembled his nomination seemed probable. He was not the choice of Republican boss Marcus Alonzo Hanna, however, and he ran second in the balloting for Vice President. Nevertheless, he continued to be active in politics. He became commissioner of pensions under McKinley, and consul-general to London under Theodore Roosevelt.<sup>30</sup>

Turney's victory in 1894 had been won at the expense of party harmony. The industrial wing had opposed the contest from the beginning, and Arthur S. Colyar had served as one of Evans' attorneys during the investigation. Also, among the fifty-seven who opposed the acceptance of the majority report were nine Democrats and ten Populists. Many Democratic papers termed the action a "steal" second only to the Tilden-Hayes presidential contest of 1876. Thus, Turney began his second term without the support of a large segment of his party. The Governor's enemies soon had fresh ammunition for renewing their attacks. Increased state expenditures, the "Paste Pot" affair,\* failure to appropriate necessary funds for the Tennessee Centennial Exposition, expenses involved in calling the legislature into two extra sessions, and failure to assess railroad property at its true value, brought increased dissension within the Democratic ranks and made it evident to all that Turney's administration would pass "unwept, unhonored, and unsung."<sup>31</sup>

Democratic prospects looked exceedingly dark in the spring of 1896. The older men among the industrialists showed considerable apathy, and some of the young men even joined the Republicans. Doubtless the Democratic party would have been doomed had not the rural constituency pushed forward the candidacy of Bob Taylor, the conciliator, who, as mentioned, returned to carry the Democratic banner to victory.

*Convict Leasing and Prison Reform*<sup>32</sup>—As has been observed in an earlier chapter, Tennessee, in comparison with other Southern states, made considerable improvements in penal reform during the ante bellum period. The war, however, disrupted economic progress and left the state with an enormous debt. Furthermore, the penitentiary had been used as a military prison and was dilapidated. The enormous increase in prison population after the war added to the problems. Hungry and displaced whites, together with freed Negroes, equally hungry, confused, and ignorant of the white man's rules, soon ran afoul of

\* Turney's enemies alleged that two members of the legislature received a total of \$3,000 per year for pasting coupons on cancelled bonds.

the law and were incarcerated. The Negroes, who before the war seldom composed more than five per cent of the prison population, by 1866 made up over half of the inmates.<sup>33</sup>

State prison operations throughout the United States still were in their infancy and were emerging from an experimental stage. The prevailing belief among authorities was that the prisoners should defray a large amount of their expenses by labor. Tennessee authorities had used penitentiary inmates in a variety of ways, including work on the state capitol. Several states, including Kentucky, Missouri, Alabama, Indiana, and Illinois, had experimented with leasing, and had discovered that from a businessman's point of view the system had many advantages. Felons were leased to individuals and companies who exploited them, but relieved the state of the maintenance costs.<sup>34</sup>

Tennessee, and indeed the South in general, was ripe for a convict lease system. As mentioned, the economy of the state had reached its nadir. Furthermore, the treasury was empty, the prison population increased daily, and expenses mounted. Moreover, Eastern businessmen in the state accentuated concepts of an independent capitalist society where labor was exploited and large gains were reaped by the investor. These ideas, combined with the concepts of a slave economy and mounting racial tensions caused by the war and reconstruction, made Tennessee a fertile field for the lease system. When several proposals to alleviate the prison conditions—including one to erect two additional penal institutions—failed because of the expense involved, legislators turned to leasing in the belief that it would pay prison costs and might even bring profits.<sup>35</sup>

Consequently, on July 16, 1866, the convicts were leased to J. L. Hyatt and C. M. Briggs, Nashville furniture manufacturers, for a four-year period. The lessees, who immediately built workshops on the prison grounds, agreed to furnish suitable food and clothing for the convicts, and to pay the state forty-three cents per day for each man. The state retained the power to appoint prison directors, who made the rules, regulations, and by-laws governing prison operation, and chose the warden. Although state officials rejoiced over the arrangement, the prisoners did not. Some inmates protested loudly and others refused to work; finally, in June, 1867, they burned the workshops. Difficulties between the state and the lessees led to a termination of the contract in July, 1869. Thus, the state again assumed responsibility for maintaining the felons.<sup>36</sup>

The termination of the Hyatt-Briggs contract caused officials to seek new lessees. Articulate industrialists, such as Arthur S. Colyar, for several years had urged that convicts could be used in coal mines. According to Colyar, less than 300 free laborers would mine coal after they considered the working conditions and the low wages; consequently, prisoners would relieve the labor shortage. Legislators in 1871 were in agreement. Accordingly, they established branch penitentiaries at the Tracy City and Battle Creek mines and leased the entire prison population to Thomas O'Conner of Knoxville and Robert F. Looney

of Memphis. The lessees, manufacturers of agricultural implements and owners of extensive mining interests in East Tennessee, received use of "the penitentiary buildings, quarry ground, fixtures, machinery, . . . [and] the labor and service of the convicts . . . ." In return, they paid the state \$30,000 per year. Nearly one-half of the prisoners manufactured wagons on the prison grounds in Nashville. Some were put to work in mines and on farms, and others were subleased to other companies. The lessees retained control of the convicts, inasmuch as their lease was renewed from time to time, until January 1, 1884, at which time a contract was made with the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company.<sup>37</sup>

In the meantime opposition to the lease system developed. Scores of miners, many who had been lured into Tennessee by immigration propaganda which promised good jobs and high wages, protested vigorously against the use of convict labor in the mines. An organization known as the "Mechanics and Manufacturers Association of Tennessee" alleged that the living conditions of the "honest mechanics" were damaged by the "suicidal" leasing system which was unfair to capital and labor alike. Doctor John Berrien Lindsley and other humanitarians condemned the state for permitting the reformatory purposes of the penitentiary to continue subservient to the desire for material gain. Leaders of the press, including editors of the Knoxville *Republican Chronicle*, the Chattanooga *Times*, the Nashville *Banner*, and the Memphis *Daily Avalanche*, severely indicted the leasing system, and one of them charged that lessees mistreated prisoners, fed them inadequately, and created living conditions which were "hells on earth where men are made devils of . . . ." The warden and other prison officials, however, argued that conditions were satisfactory. George W. Cable, a Southern emigrant sojourning in Massachusetts, in February, 1884, surveyed the lease system in all the Southern states and found prison conditions in Tennessee less offensive than in some of the other states.<sup>38</sup>

Officials of the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company signed a five-year lease in 1884 and agreed to pay the state \$101,000 per annum. The contract was renewed from time to time and ultimately expired on December 31, 1895. The company had extensive coal and iron mines in East Tennessee, and there many of the convicts were worked. Others were subleased to other companies. The decade was the most turbulent one in the quarter century of convict leasing, and the labor unrest which developed led to the abolishment of the lease system.<sup>39</sup>

Criticisms of prison conditions brought legislative investigations. Just after the general assembly convened in January, 1885, the editor of the Chattanooga *Times* published a "shocking story" about prison conditions. A recently discharged convict had told of having to mine coal "in water a foot deep" and of being whipped with a lash of "3-ply sole leather braid, applied with all the strength the guards could summon." Prisoners who complained about the rough prison fare, which at its best was unpalatable, received only kicks and the lash well laid on. Other similar reports followed. A legislative committee investigated



the charges and filed two reports. The majority found adequate living conditions at the prison, observed that inmates were treated "kindly and humanely," and affirmed that the food was equal in quality to that "used by some of the best families of Nashville." The minority alleged that an objective investigation could not be conducted because prison officials, anticipating the visit of legislators, did considerable whitewashing before the committee made its inspection. Nevertheless, the minority group did report that beatings were administered with a lash which "it would be cruel to whip even an ox," and that the food was unsatisfactory. They recommended "unconditional repeal" of the lease system.<sup>40</sup>

Investigations also were made in 1887 and 1889. As before, the committee members filed two reports. Morale and discipline, said the majority, left nothing to be desired, and the prisoners had adequate food, comfortable beds, and sufficient clothing. The minority found, however, that the prison plant was unsafe and unsanitary, that prisoners engaged in considerable vice, including homosexuality and sodomy, that punishments inflicted upon inmates were too severe, and that the whole system was "a horror and shame upon the state. . . ." They recommended the abolition of the branch prison system and the establishment of a new central penitentiary. The leasing system was too profitable to be abandoned, however, and in the same year the contract with the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company was renewed. The state officials could point to a net profit of \$771,400 in 1890, which amount was only \$176,000 short of the entire cost of penal institutions since the beginning in 1829.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the favorable reports from legislative committees, and regardless of the huge profits realized from the system, labor and manufacturing groups across the state joined a large segment of newspaper editors, ministers, lawyers, health officials, and public-spirited citizens to advocate abolition of the lease system. They recommended the adoption of a central prison system having manufacturing and agricultural facilities at which convicts might work. Agitation on the part of these groups, combined with a series of labor disturbances in East Tennessee, eventually led to the abolition of the lease system.<sup>42</sup>

By 1891 the mining industry had grown, from its infancy in 1870, to a respectable size in Tennessee. Although mine owners reaped sizable profits, the coal miner could maintain only a bare subsistence living. Miners had objected to the use of convict labor for two decades; especially obnoxious to them was the use of felons as strikebreakers. They could point to many other grievances. They were paid in "scrip" (which forced the miner to spend his wages at the company store or have his "scrip" discounted in other stores), were forced to sign "iron-clad" contracts pledging confidence in the company officials, and had to promise not to strike. The inflamed miners saw in the use of convict labor a practice which would strip them of the small livelihood they then received. Therefore, the East Tennessee mining communities were tinderboxes where a spark might set off a conflagration.<sup>43</sup>

Trouble soon developed. Violence first ensued in July, 1891, when convicts were taken to Briceville (in Anderson County) as strikebreakers. Three hundred armed miners entered the stockade and forced convicts, officers, and guards to march to Coal Creek (now called Lake City) and there to entrain for Knoxville. A few days later Governor Buchanan, accompanied by the convicts and a battalion of state militiamen, journeyed to the scene. He heard the complaints of the miners, pleaded with them for law observance, and then returned to Nashville, leaving the convicts and the militia. On July 20, 2,000 miners forced the convicts and soldiers to return to Knoxville. Shortly thereafter miners freed the prisoners at the Knoxville Iron Company's mine at Briceville, and sent them to Knoxville to join their fellow convicts. Governor Buchanan again journeyed eastward to hear complaints and ordered fourteen companies of the militia to mobilize at Knoxville. After several days of negotiation, the Governor and the miners agreed that the militia would be removed from the scene; that the convicts and guards would return to the mines; and that the miners would repose "confidence in the governor and general assembly."<sup>44</sup>

The situation was far from settled, however. The Governor called the legislature into special session shortly after his return to Nashville, but little was done. A bill to repeal the lease law was defeated in the house of representatives by a two to one margin. Miners then sought relief in the courts. Receiving no encouragement there, they resolved that the Governor, the legislature, and the courts were in league with the capitalists of the coal mines; therefore, once again they resorted to force and violence. On the night of October 31, 1891, several hundred miners surrounded the Briceville stockade, released the prisoners, burned the stockade and other buildings, and then silently disappeared into the hills. Two nights later they liberated 200 convicts at Oliver Springs, in Roane County, and applied the torch to the buildings. Most of the convicts were apprehended and returned to the penitentiary at Nashville. In July, 1892, outbreaks occurred at the Tracy City and Inman mines in Grundy County. Buchanan pursued a vacillating course, but he did offer rewards for the apprehension and conviction of the leaders and sought to shift the blame to the legislature and the lessees. Some miners were arrested, but few were convicted. As one scholar has explained it, "the judicial farce was due to the overwhelming sympathy of the citizenry and of the courts with the miners in their difficulties and to the state's policy of retaining the militia in the community just to maintain the hated convict lease system."<sup>45</sup>

The four gubernatorial candidates of 1892—Turney, Buchanan, Winstead, and East—pledged immediate abolition of the lease system. During the campaign Colonel Colyar stated that the hiring of convicts as strikebreakers was no longer profitable, and Nathaniel Baxter, vice president of the Tennessee Coal, Iron, and Railroad Company stated that anti-leasing agitation and the Anderson, Roane, and Grundy trouble had "demoralized convicts."<sup>46</sup>

The legislators hastily found a substitute for the lease system. They enacted a measure which provided for a new penitentiary large enough to house 1,500 convicts; it would be "managed and conducted upon just, humane, and civilized principles." Furthermore, so that convicts would not be in competition with free labor, the state was required to purchase "not more than ten thousand . . . acres" of coal lands. In accordance with the measure, "about 9,000 acres" of coal lands in Morgan County were bought. The Brushy Mountain Prison was built, and prison labor was used to mine the first coal there in 1895. For the penitentiary grounds the state purchased the Mark Cockrill farm, a 1,128 acre tract located approximately six miles west of Nashville on the south bank of the Cumberland River. Work on a prison, modern in every respect, was begun immediately and completed in 1898. It cost more than \$800,000, and consisted of an administration building, two wings of four hundred cells each, a hospital, and separate quarters for women. By the end of the century the state had developed, through considerable trial and error, a prison system which met the demands of the critics.<sup>47</sup>

Humanitarians also severely criticized lack of separate facilities for juvenile offenders. Collins D. Elliott, for example, in 1881 pointed with shame to more than 400 prisoners twenty-one years of age or under, and urged legislators to establish a separate reformatory. Numerous religious and humanitarian groups petitioned the general assembly to comply with Elliott's suggestions. Judge John C. Ferriss of Nashville canvassed the state in an effort to arouse public sentiment.<sup>48</sup>

When the state did nothing, Colonel Edmond W. Cole provided money for the establishment of a reformatory for both youthful offenders and "abandoned" children. He asked that it be called the Randall Cole Institute, in honor of a deceased son. The state accepted Cole's gift in 1887, but changed the name to the Tennessee Industrial School. "Abandoned" children and "youthful convicts" were accepted, but "in no event" were they to "associate or work" together. Inasmuch as the school facilities were limited, many youthful offenders continued to be sent to the penitentiary from which they were leased along with hardened criminals. Reformers continued to urge that state reformatories be established, but it was not until after the turn of the century that their demands were met.<sup>49</sup>

#### CHAPTER XXXI—NOTES

1. Daniel M. Robison, State Librarian, is the best informed person on the period here considered. His penetrating study, *Bob Taylor and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee*, was used and cited in the preceding chapter. This distinguished work, together with articles which Doctor Robison has published in scholarly journals as cited below, have been used freely by the present author. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 21; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 693.



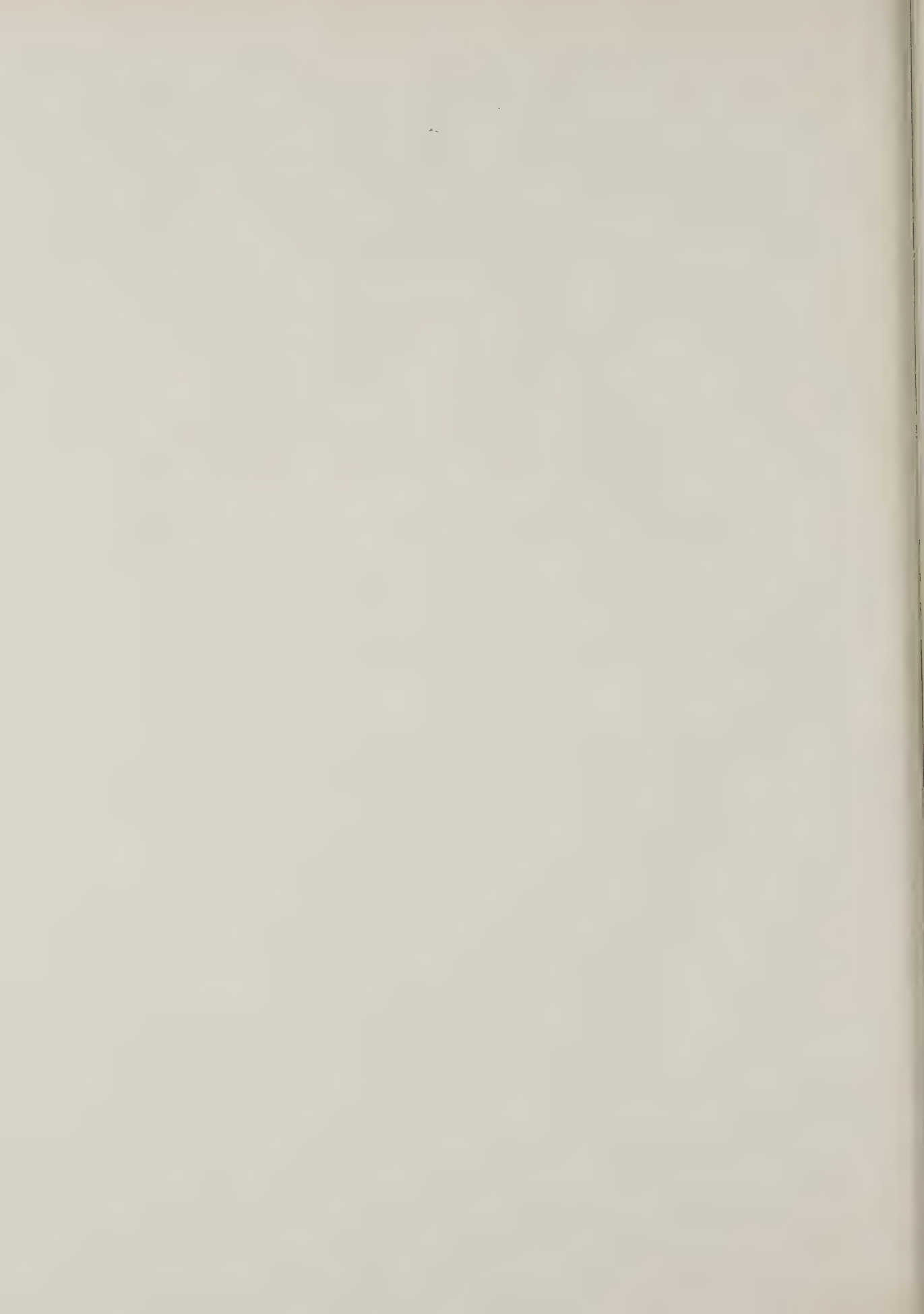
2. Robison, "Tennessee Politics and the Agrarian Revolt in Tennessee, 1886-1896," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XX (December, 1933), 365; "The Political Background of Tennessee's War of the Roses," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 5 (1933), 125-29; J. Eugene Lewis, "The Tennessee Gubernatorial Campaign and Election of 1894," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XIII (June, 1954), 100.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 24; "War of Roses," 128; Verton M. Queener, "The East Tennessee Republicans in State and Nation, 1870-1900," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, II (June, 1943), 102; "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 49-73. Editors of Democratic newspapers were eager to publish stories of Negro defections from the Republican ranks. Much publicity was given to the matter by one West Tennessee editor, who quoted a Henry County Negro as confessing that Republican leaders had taught him "so many bad things" that they got him "in the penitentiary." *Paris Post-Intelligencer*, September 14, 1888. For two decades the editor of the Nashville *Daily American* published stories before each election of Negro defections. Ministers and humanitarians frequently advised Negroes to refrain from political activity and to give more attention to economic pursuits. In 1890 an editor in Montgomery County, where the Negro population exceeded the white, advised blacks to give more attention to "meat and bread, . . . employment, good clothes, houses and schools" rather than to "force bills and . . . partyism." *Clarksville Semi-Weekly Tobacco Leaf-Chronicle*, May 20, 1890. Two years later, the Reverend Sam Jones, in addressing an overflow crowd of Knoxville Negroes, put whiskey and "politics" in the same category and advised his listeners that "the least you have to do with politics the better you'll come out." *Knoxville Journal*, March 11, 1892. Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, Nashville Negro who led thousands of blacks to the Northwest after the war, was quoted as telling his colored listeners: "Hyar you is a-potter'n round in politics and tryin' to git in office . . . . You can't see that these white tramps from the North is simply usin' you for to line their pockets and when they git through they'll drop you . . . ." Walter L. Fleming, "'Pap' Singleton, The Moses of the Colored Exodus," *American Journal of Sociology*, XV (July, 1909-1910), 62. In 1895 a white Baptist preacher told both whites and blacks in Nashville that the Negro "has no more chance in politics than a hound dog." *Nashville Daily American*, March 11, 1895. By 1900 Negroes showed less interest in politics than they had thirty years earlier, but only a small minority had been weaned from the party of the Great Emancipator.
6. Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 64.
7. Taylor's letter in *Nashville Banner*, January 11, 1886; Robison, "War of Roses," 129-33; *Bob Taylor*, 27-29, 35-36; "Tennessee Politics," 366; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 694; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans in State and Nation," 101.
8. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 46; "War of Roses," 134, 139-40.
9. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 40, 58-59; "War of Roses," 140-41; Rupert B. Vance, "Tennessee's War of the Roses," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, XVI (Summer, 1940), 417 ff.
10. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 64.
11. *Ibid.*, 61, 68; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans in State and Nation," 107. For an evaluation of Bob Taylor as an orator, see Lane L. Boutwell, "The Oratory of Robert Love Taylor," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (March, 1950), 10-45.

12. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 70; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 64.
13. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 49-57.
14. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 694; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 64, 67; Ellis P. Oberholtzer, *A History of the United States Since the Civil War* (5 vols., New York, 1917-1937), IV, 557-63; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, Chapter IV; "Governor Robert L. Taylor and the Blair Educational Bill in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series 2, II (October, 1931), 28-49. The Blair bill was passed in the Senate but defeated in the House.
15. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 694; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 126-27; J. A. Sharp, "The Entrance of the Farmers' Alliance into Tennessee Politics," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 9 (1937), 85-86, hereinafter cited as "Farmers' Alliance"; *Public Acts*, 1889, Chap. CLXXXVIII, 364-71; Chap. CCVII, 414-20; Chap. CCXVIII, 437-38; 1870, Chap. X, 25-26; 1873, Chap. I, 3; *House Journal, Appendix*, 1887, pp. 15, 34; *Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Tennessee, 1888* (Nashville, 1888), 266; *Nashville Banner*, January 5, 1889; Williams, "Poll Tax," 116; also his "The Poll Tax as a Suffrage Requirement in the South, 1870-1901," *Journal of Southern History*, XVIII (November, 1952), 472-83. The Dortch Law, which applied to counties of 70,000 and cities of 9,000, was modified in 1891 to include counties of 50,000. *Public Acts*, Chap. CCXXIII, 437. When the Lodge "Force Bill," which provided for federal control over federal elections, failed for want of a majority vote, the 1891 legislature repealed the separate ballot box law. *Public Acts*, 1891, Chap. CLXI, 337.
16. Solon J. Buck, *The Agrarian Crusade* (New Haven, 1921), 1-11; Ralph V. Harlow, *The United States: From Wilderness to World Power* (New York, 1949), 421; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 135; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 64-65.
17. *Ibid.*, 65-66; Corinne Westphal, "The Farmers' Alliance in Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1929), 24-26; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 135-36; Sharp, "Farmers' Alliance," 78.
18. Robison, "The Agrarian Revolt," 367; J. A. Sharp, "The Farmers' Alliance and Tennessee Politics, 1890-1892" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1931), 34-35; Westphal, "Farmers' Alliance," 25-31.
19. J. A. Sharp, "The Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party in Tennessee," E.T.H. S. *Publications*, No. 10 (1938), 91 ff., hereinafter cited as "People's Party in Tennessee"; "Farmers' Alliance," 83-84, 86; "Farmers' Alliance and Tennessee Politics," 43; Westphal, "Farmers' Alliance," 47; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 138 ff.; "Agrarian Revolt," 368; *Nashville Banner*, July 19, 1890.
20. Miller, *Official and Political Manual*, 278-80.
21. John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt* (Minneapolis, 1931), 80-81, 178; Robison, "Agrarian Revolt," 54; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 694; *Public Acts*, 1891, Chap. LXIV, 150-52.
22. Sharp, "People's Party in Tennessee," 92; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 158-59; "Agrarian Revolt," 373-74.
23. *Ibid.*, 376; *Bob Taylor*, 172-74; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 70-72; Sharp, "People's Party in Tennessee," 106-12; "Farmers' Alliance and Tennessee Politics," 206; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 700. The "deal" herein mentioned was made public by the publication of the Hill-Ivins correspondence and is discussed in detail in Robison's, Sharp's, and Queener's studies, as cited above.

24. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 181-83.
25. Rufus Terral, *Newell Sanders, A Biography* (Chattanooga, 1935), 83 ff.; Lewis, "Election of 1894," 109-11, 115-21.
26. *Ibid.*, 236-37.
27. *Ibid.*, 226, 234; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 63; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 184.
28. Lewis, "Election of 1894," 304-05; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 700.
29. *Public Acts*, 1895, Chap. IX, 13-18; Lewis, "Election of 1894," 321-22, 324; Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 187; Queener, "East Tennessee Republicans as a Minority Party," 72; "Report of the Committee on Governor's Election," in *Contest for Governor in Tennessee; Complete Proceedings of the Joint Convention and the Investigating Committee, and the Evidence in Full and Arguments of Counsel* (2 vols., Nashville, 1895), II, 272; Terral, *Newell Sanders*, 124 ff.
30. Lewis, "Election of 1894," 327-28.
31. Robison, *Bob Taylor*, 188-89.
32. Jesse Crawford Crowe, Professor of History at Kentucky Wesleyan College, is the outstanding authority on penal reform movements in Tennessee during the three decades before the turn of the century. His "Agitation for Penal Reform in Tennessee, 1870-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1954), and his article, "The Origin and Development of Tennessee's Prison Problem, 1831-1871," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XV (June, 1956), pp. 111-35, have been cited earlier in chapter 23. See also Verdel Nicley, "History of the Tennessee Penitentiary, 1865-1890" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1933), and Hilda Jane Zimmerman, "Penal Systems and Penal Reforms in the South Since the Civil War" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1947).
33. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 742; Crowe, "Penal Reform," 25-27; "Tennessee's Prison Problem," 122-23.
34. Crowe, "Penal Reform," 25; Blake McKelvey, *American Prisons: A Study in American Social History Prior to 1915* (Chicago, 1936), 16 ff.
35. White (ed.), *Messages*, V, 585; *Public Acts*, 2 sess., 1865-66, Chap. XXXIV, 48-52; *Senate Journal*, 1865-66, p. 21; Nicley, "Tennessee Penitentiary," 6; Corlew, "Negro in Tennessee," 205-06.
36. Crowe, "Tennessee's Prison Problem," 127; *House Journal*, extra sess., 1868, pp. 75-79; *Appendix*, 1869-70, p. 167. State officials considered that they had made a bargain. A few months after the contract was signed directors advised legislators that, "Now, every convict, old or young, skilled or unpracticed, clumsy, indolent, or vicious, is at once turned over, at forty-three cents per day; and it is the lessee's business, to provide work profitable or otherwise, without regard to the character, condition or competency of the laborer. Possibly the convict may have been a good field hand, to plow, hoe, or chop wood, but within the walls of the prison, no such employment is to be had, and the laborer may said to be both green and raw. Hence to instruct and to put mechanical tools into the hands of a novice, and pay forty cents per day, besides, is compensation greater than at first appears." *House Journal*, 2 adj. sess., *Appendix* (Governor's Message), 94-95.
37. *Public Acts*, 1871, Senate Joint Resolution No. LXXXI, 237-41; 1875, Chap. LII, 54-55; Chap. CLXXI, 233-44; Crowe, "Tennessee's Prison Problem," 131; "Penal Reform," 92; Nicley, "Tennessee Penitentiary," 91; Wooldridge, *Nashville*, 228; *House Journal*, 1871, *Appendix*, 213-18; *Senate Journal*, 1871, pp. 213-22.
38. Crowe, "Penal Reform," 87 ff., 92 ff.; *Union and American*, October 12, 1871;



- Knoxville *Republican Chronicle*, February 6, 1884; George W. Cable, "The Convict Lease System in the Southern States," *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, XXVII (1883-1884), 585.
39. Chattanooga *Daily Times*, September 15, 1889; *Public Acts*, 1889, Chap. CCIV, 399-411.
  40. *Times*, January 27, 1885; (The Nashville *Banner*, an afternoon paper, released the story on the same day); *House Journal*, 1885, pp. 775-76, 783-88.
  41. *House Journal*, 1887, pp. 853-58; 1889, pp. 306-09, 322-25; A. C. Hutson, Jr., "The Coal Miners' Insurrections of 1891 in Anderson County, Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 7 (1935), 105.
  42. Crowe, "Penal Reform," 290; Hutson, "The Overthrow of the Convict Lease System in Tennessee," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 82-103.
  43. Crowe, "Penal Reform," 253; Hutson, "Coal Miners' Insurrection," 105-07. The state legislature in 1887 made mandatory the redemption in cash of the scrip within thirty days after issuance and in 1891 outlawed the use of scrip. Some companies continued to issue the money substitute, however, in defiance of the law. See Virginia M. Holmes, "A History of Tennessee Labor Legislation" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1945), 27 ff; *Public Acts*, 1887, Chap. CCIX, 340; 1891, extra sess., Chap. V, 18-19.
  44. Hutson, "Coal Miners' Insurrection," 108-09, 113-15, 118-19.
  45. *House Journal*, 1891, extra sess., 108-09; State *ex rel.*, vs. Jack, 90 Tenn. 614; Knoxville *Journal*, November 2, 1891; Hutson, "Overthrow of Lease System," 91-93, 98; Crowe, "Penal Reform," 271 ff.
  46. *Ibid.*, 291-92.
  47. *Ibid.*, 310 ff.; *Public Acts*, 1893, Chap. LXXVIII, 96-105; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 744-45.
  48. "Report of the Chaplain" in *House and Senate Journal*, 1881, *Appendix*, 29-31; Crowe, "Penal Reform," 221.
  49. *Ibid.*, 226; *Public Acts*, 1887, Chap. CLXV, 286-88; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 758.



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## CHAPTER XXXII

### *Tennessee in the Gilded Age*

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THE NADIR OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY American culture, tastes, refinement, and morals was reached, according to Vernon L. Parrington, in the years that followed the Civil War. "Chromo civilization" was the descriptive phrase used by Edward Lawrence Godkin to label the milieu over which his eyes wandered. Mark Twain, of course, supplied the most widely used summary when he wrote of the "gilded age." The extremes of the Reconstruction period, the graft and corruption of the Grant era, and the increased emphasis upon materialism left their marks on American morals. It was an era of millionaires; captains of industry, some lacking utterly in refinement and cultural background, plied their wares with energy and reaped enormous profits. On the other hand, it was a period of reform as well as one of conspicuous consumption, and some solid achievements resulted. Soon after the Civil War Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, published in 1859, made its impact upon American thought. Although hastily rejected by fundamentalists, Darwin's tenets were partly responsible for the decline of transcendentalist thought and the formulation of a new philosophy known as pragmatism.\*<sup>1</sup>

The materialistic philosophy, admittedly most apparent in the lusty and confident North and East for obvious reasons, had its exponents and practitioners in Tennessee and the South, as evidenced earlier in our chapter on industrial growth. The three decades following reconstruction were filled with reform movements, as though the people were anxious to flee from guilty consciences; or, on the other hand, perhaps they sincerely desired to reap better things for themselves and their children by worshipping at the shrine of Mammon. Although Tennesseans registered a decline in religious activity, they enjoyed increased emphasis upon education—with less attention to the liberal arts and more upon "practical" subjects. The century closed with the state's greatest display of fact and fancy—the Centennial Exposition of 1897.

*Education and Religion*—One of the vital reforms of the period was that of education. Fortunately, even in the Brownlow administration legislators had

\* William James wrote of pragmatism, "The ultimate test for us of what a truth means is the conduct it dictates or inspires." Truth, then, was "what worked"—in the material and practical sense of the term. Quoted in Morison and Commager, *Growth of American Republic*, II, 271.



turned their attention to the school problem. As mentioned earlier, Tennesseans had not established an effective system for centralized direction by 1861. Governor Brownlow realized that the war had disrupted the private schools of the state, and soon after his election he asked legislators to establish a public school system so that "thousands of children" would not "pass the school age hopelessly illiterate." Not until 1867, however, did the legislature comply. The act provided for centralized control; the system would be headed by a state superintendent of the common schools, under whom county superintendents would work. Increased taxes would support the program. John Eaton, Jr., New Hampshire-born minister who served with Grant as a chaplain and later published a newspaper in Memphis, was named state superintendent. A man of considerable energy and inspiration, Eaton toured the state to examine school needs firsthand. In 1869 he prepared a comprehensive survey of educational needs in Tennessee, and state officials published it under the title of *The First Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Tennessee*. In the report Eaton called for increased appropriations for education and sweeping changes in the educational program. He asked for better school buildings, more attention to outhouses and playgrounds, normal schools for improvement of teachers, and equal opportunities for Negroes.<sup>2</sup>

Within a few months after the publication of Eaton's report, the Radicals were swept from power. Inconoclastic Democrats, anxious to destroy the last vestige of Brownlowism, tossed aside both the good and the evil—the educational program being among the former. They abolished the office of state superintendent and made the counties responsible for establishing schools. No provision was made for Negro education.<sup>3</sup>

Interest in a public school system continued, however. Public spirited citizens aroused the people to the need, and soon the legislature was flooded with petitions requesting that changes be made. A "State Convention of Colored Men," meeting in Nashville in 1871 under an American flag flanked with pictures of Abraham Lincoln and John Brown, petitioned Congress to establish a national system of schools. In the following year Governor John C. Brown called legislators into special session and recommended that they establish a constructive educational program, but his efforts were in vain. The legislature did, however, order printed several thousand copies of a comprehensive study of state educational needs prepared by Joseph B. Killebrew. This report laid the foundation for the educational law of 1873 and the present system of public education. Killebrew, like John Eaton, emphasized pragmatic rather than the cultural values of learning; he stressed the economic opportunities which stemmed from education. Fewer prisoners would have to be maintained at state expense, he said; men who had been trained to make a living would be less inclined to commit crime. The failure of legislators to act brought additional petitions and more condemnation upon state authorities.<sup>4</sup>

When the general assembly convened in 1873, Brown told legislators that

because the illiteracy rate was so high Tennessee ranked "third in ignorance" among the states of the Union—a condition he described as "a disgrace to our people." Shortly thereafter, "An Act to Establish and Maintain a Uniform System of Public Schools" became law by comfortable majorities in both houses. The bill provided for a state superintendent of public instruction to be appointed by the governor\* and for county superintendents—"men of literary and scientific attainments"—to be elected biennially by the county courts. Under the county superintendent were school directors—three for each civil district in the county. A permanent school fund of \$2,512,000 was reestablished, and six per cent interest paid semiannually on this amount was to be used for the support of schools, in addition to the emoluments received from a poll tax and a property tax. County courts could levy additional taxes where local needs made such necessary. Although similar to the law of 1867 in many respects, the act of 1873 has been considered by educators as the parent act of the present school system.<sup>5</sup>

The decade following the enactment of the public school law was a difficult one for school officials. As mentioned in an earlier chapter,\*\* the state debt seemed to defy settlement, especially after the financial depression which ensued after the Panic of 1873. County superintendents outlined tales of woe. In 1875 the superintendent of Dyer County stated that all schools had been closed; the Bedford County head reported that the "lack of . . . money" curtailed educational activity there. Others complained of depression, drought, and sickness. The state superintendent reported that 60,000 fewer pupils were enrolled in 1875 than in the previous year. By 1880 slow recovery was being made, but still the state superintendent wrote of "disaster and apprehensions of impoverishment . . . ." In his tours of many counties he encountered not only financial embarrassment, but "distrust, prejudice, and honest opposition" as well. Some financial handicaps were overcome by money provided by the Peabody Fund, established by George Peabody during the Reconstruction period for the education of both whites and blacks. An outstanding authority on education, Edgar Knight, has described the Fund as the most beneficial of all organizations at work in the South. By 1870 Tennessee schools had received \$17,000, and four years later received twice that amount yearly. In 1877 a New York reporter observed that Tennesseans were making an honest effort to educate both blacks and whites, and he included Tennessee with two other Southern states as the most "progressive" in the South so far as Negro education was concerned.<sup>6</sup>

Several school laws were enacted during the next two decades which deserve brief mention. In 1889 a law was passed making women eligible for the office of county superintendent. Two years later the legislature established

\* Brown promptly appointed a young man, John M. Fleming, who already was well known in state educational circles and who then edited the *Tennessee School Journal*.

\*\* Chapter 30.

two classes of schools, primary and secondary. Up until this time secondary education had been largely a function of academies and private schools. In the same year the state superintendent became *ex-officio* member of the State Board of Education, where his influence and knowledge could be used more effectively. In 1895 the State Board of Education was authorized to specify standards and qualifications for county superintendents; to those who qualified the board issued certificates which had to be filed with the chairmen of the county courts. Two years later a more efficient accounting system was installed by requiring county trustees to make quarterly settlements with the county courts. In 1899 the "Uniform Textbook Law" established a state commission whose functions included the adoption of a series of textbooks which would be used in all public schools.<sup>7</sup>

Poorly trained and incompetent teachers constituted a problem which almost every county superintendent faced. Soon after the basic educational act was passed the editor of the *Pulaski Citizen* pointed to the "insurmountable obstacles" involved in finding competent teachers. Negro teachers, especially, brought worry. In 1877 the state superintendent reported that in "almost every county" local officials were forced to employ "incompetent Negro teachers."<sup>8</sup>

During the 1880's teachers' institutes and colleges (the latter to be discussed later) supplied at least a partial answer to the problem posed by incompetent teachers. Although begun during the 1870's, the institutes did not become popular until the following decade. They usually lasted from one to three weeks and often were conducted by a college professor or visiting school official. In 1884, State Superintendent Thomas H. Paine announced that institutes would be conducted in each senatorial district for one month. He was confident that the sessions would result in "marked improvement . . . in every grade throughout the state." Four years later more than 4,000 teachers attended institutes held in ninety of the ninety-six counties. In 1892 Superintendent R. L. Jones of White County reported that his teachers found only one summer institute was insufficient. He planned monthly sessions throughout the year for white teachers and more frequent ones for the Negroes. The institutes obviously were of value. While it is possible that at some sessions the participants were seated in semi-circles where they shared each other's experiences and were motivated dynamically to promote "togetherness," "oneness," and "oughtness," there is no evidence that nineteenth century educators were aware of modern methods. Many leaders doubtless could report, as did the conductor of a Shelby County institute, that "the teachers in attendance did carefully note and study these topics . . . : spelling and sentence analysis; geography . . . , and American history . . . ."<sup>9</sup>

Fears of integrated, or "mixed," schools harassed administrators, especially during the 1870's. Although segregation in the public schools was provided during the Brownlow administration and was written into the Constitution of 1870, the recurring talk of "force bills" in Congress hindered educational progress in



Tennessee. When, in 1874, it appeared that integration would be forced upon the South by Congress, state leaders spoke out against it. The editor of the *Tennessee School Journal* attributed a lack of interest in education to "the attempt of . . . Congress to force upon the several states, the co-education of the races." The state superintendent ordered county superintendents and public school directors not to issue new contracts until the matter was settled. He believed that "mixed Schools" would "never be . . . sustained by our people" and would create "a juvenile war of the races." Even in the 1890's white people wrote letters to newspaper editors to express their faith in segregation.<sup>10</sup>

Emphasis upon segregation did not mean that authorities failed to give attention to Negro schools. In some counties after the Panic of 1873, Negro schools were operated when white ones were not. In 1888 Haywood County whites complained to the state superintendent that "the colored people get the lions' share" of school funds; they asked that whites be given equal consideration. Editors of the rural press frequently commended Negroes for making educational progress. In 1884 a Clarksville editor devoted one column of his front page to a description of Negro education and progress in Montgomery County. In the following year the editor of the Savannah *Courier* observed that only by education could the Negro be made "a better citizen." Practically all agreed with the editor of a Columbia paper, who pledged "unqualified endorsement" of the work of those teaching Negroes.<sup>11</sup>

Colleges and universities also made progress during the three decades following reconstruction. George Peabody College and many normal schools and academies took the lead in training teachers. "The Peabody State Normal School of the University of Nashville" was established in December, 1875, from funds provided by George Peabody, a wealthy New York philanthropist. On the first day of school (December 1) thirteen students enrolled. Authorities, recognizing the need for teacher training in Tennessee and the South, soon closed the doors of the medical schools and other departments and concentrated entirely upon preparing teachers. In 1878 the name of the school was changed to that of "State Normal College," and a few years thereafter, to "Peabody Normal College." In 1881 the state legislature appropriated \$10,000 per year for school maintenance and by 1895 had doubled its annual appropriation. Not until shortly after the turn of the century did school officials change the name to "George Peabody College for Teachers."<sup>12</sup>

Vanderbilt University, soon to become one of the foremost institutions of the South, was chartered in 1873. The financial generosity of Cornelius Vanderbilt and the untiring efforts of leaders in the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church, particularly Bishop Holland N. McTyeire and Landon C. Garland, the latter of whom became the first chancellor, were responsible for the institution. By 1875 the University was in full operation with four general departments, which included law, medicine, religion, and arts and science. The election in 1893 of James Hampton Kirkland, a thirty-three year old professor



(Courtesy of the College)

*Nashville—George Peabody College for Teachers—Social-Religious Building*

of Latin, as chancellor, meant continued advancement and emphasis upon sound scholarship and able teaching.\* At the turn of the century Nashvillians hailed the institution as "the pride of Nashville and of the whole South." Academic, theological, pharmaceutical, and engineering departments were maintained on the main campus; law, dental, and medical departments were operated in other parts of town.<sup>13</sup>

Authorities of the University of Tennessee trace their institution's history to Blount College (1794), although not until 1879 was the name of East Tennessee University changed to that of the University of Tennessee. With the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862, Congress granted considerable land to the states, the proceeds from which were to be used for the development of agricultural and mechanical colleges. Tennessee, in the Confederacy at the time,

\* Kirkland infused into the University a love for truth and a hatred for sham, a spirit which persists to this day. Dr. Edwin Mims, in his *Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt*, quotes one student who said of Kirkland, "He put into my soul the love of truth, the hatred of a lie. He made pretense forever a dastardly and damned thing to me. He taught me what thoroughness and genuineness and reality mean in the world. Pretense and hypocrisy had a new meaning for me." pp. 76-77.



(Courtesy of the Museum)

*Nashville—Children's Museum Building, the first building of  
The University of Nashville, erected in 1853*

could not avail itself of federal aid until seven years later. The legislature promptly established an Agricultural and Mechanical College as a part of the University and transferred to it the proceeds of the endowment resulting from the Morrill Act. By 1879, when the name was changed, four courses of study described as "agricultural, mechanical, classical, and scientific," were offered. Dr. Charles W. Dabney became president in 1887 and his sixteen years of service represented a period of solid growth for the University. In 1890 the school of law opened with a two-year curriculum, and three years later the University was reopened to women.<sup>14</sup>

The origin of the University of Chattanooga may be traced to Chattanooga University, which was organized by the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After several years of acrimonious debate the Chattanooga school was consolidated with East Tennessee Wesleyan University, at Athens, under the name of U. S. Grant University. Dissatisfaction continued, and in 1892-1893 a division was effected whereby the College of Liberal Arts was moved to Athens (sixty miles distant), and the professional schools of





(Courtesy of the College)

*Jackson—Lambuth College Administration Building*

medicine, law, and theology remained at Chattanooga. Not until after the turn of the century was the liberal arts school returned to Chattanooga, the name "University of Chattanooga" adopted, and control taken from the Methodist Church and placed in the hands of a private board of trustees.<sup>15</sup>

The University of the South, at Sewanee, established in 1857 but unable to begin operation until after the war, has emerged as one of the state's outstanding liberal arts colleges. The school was reopened in 1866 at Winchester, but in the following year was moved back to "the Mountain" a few miles east of the Franklin County seat. It was reopened largely through the efforts of Bishop Charles T. Quintard and the philanthropy of his brothers, George and Edward. In 1868 only nine students were enrolled, but by 1870 the institution had 125 students. Enrollment fell slightly during the next two decades, but by 1890 it numbered several hundred, and three permanent buildings had been erected. The school also had one of the best libraries in the state.<sup>16</sup>

Other colleges—Cumberland, Maryville, Southwestern, Lincoln Memorial,



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Nashville—Library at Fisk University*

Tusculum, Bethel, Carson-Newman, Union, Lambuth, Nashville Bible School (David Lipscomb), and others too numerous to name—also made contributions within their own particular spheres. Cumberland University, under the guidance of such able teachers as Nathan Green, A. B. Martin, and E. E. Beard, became known throughout the nation for its law school.<sup>17</sup>

Several colleges were established for Negroes during the period. One of the best known, "Fisk School," was founded in Nashville in 1866 through the joint efforts of the American Missionary Association and the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission of Cincinnati. In 1867 the name was changed to "Fisk University." George L. White soon organized the "Fisk Jubilee Singers," a group of students which toured the country and much of Europe and earned for the school over \$150,000. When in 1879 members of the legislature heard the Negro chorus for the first time, they described the performance as "remarkable," and passed a joint resolution commending University officials for the progress in



Negro education. By 1900 the buildings and grounds were valued at \$350,000. Schools of arts and science, religion, and teacher training had been established, from which were graduated 433 students. Among other institutions for Negroes established after the war were Roger Williams University, Nashville, founded by Baptist leaders; Central Tennessee College, Nashville, chartered in 1866 by the Methodist Episcopal Church; Knoxville College,\* founded in 1875 by the United Presbyterian Church; Lane College, Jackson, established in 1882 by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School, Memphis, founded in 1871 from funds supplied by F. Julius LeMoyne and the American Missionary Society of the Congregational Church.<sup>18</sup>

By the turn of the century Tennesseans could point to considerable educational progress since the basic law of 1873 was enacted. In the public schools the enrollment had increased more than one hundred per cent. The average length of terms now was nearly five months, as compared with a three and one-half month term in 1874. The number of schools had increased from 4,588 to 7,963, the number of institutes held had increased sixfold, and the estimated value of school plant and equipment had increased threefold. Even teachers' salaries had increased; teachers had received a thirteen-cent raise during the quarter century.\*\* Colleges and universities of high rank also had been established. Vanderbilt University rapidly was becoming one of the leading universities of the South. The University of Tennessee was expanding, and Sewanee, Chattanooga, and Southwestern offered liberal arts programs which found few peers in the South.<sup>19</sup>

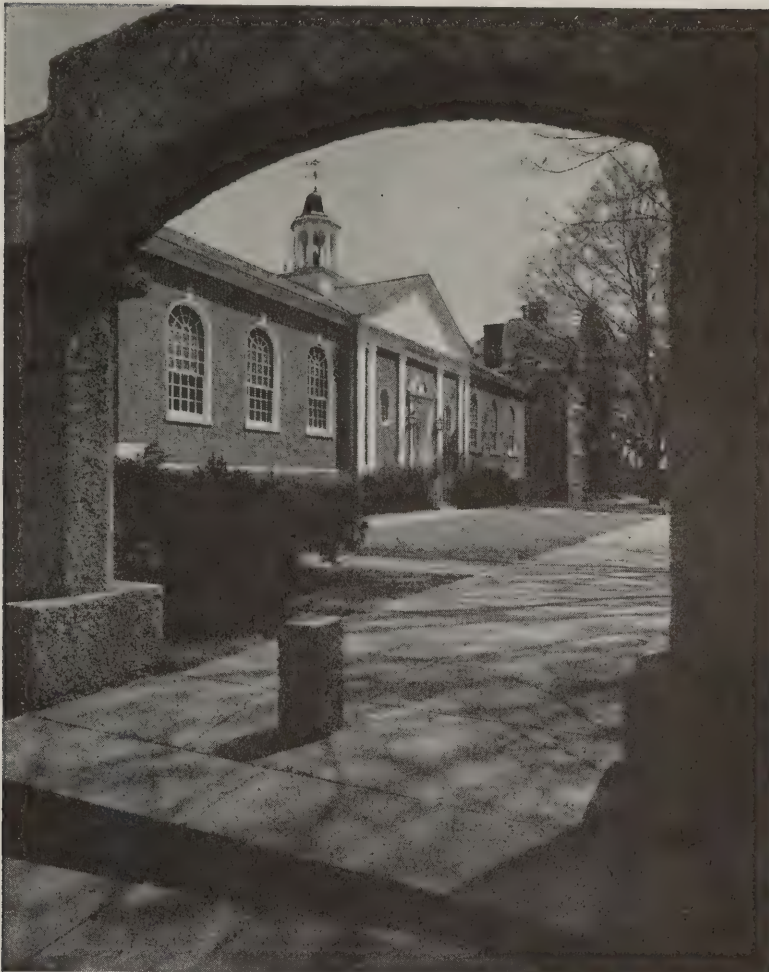
During the four decades following the war only one state registered less religious growth, as indicated by church membership, than did Tennessee. No great revival swept the state as in 1800; perhaps the war and reconstruction, coupled with new concepts of Darwinism, pragmatism, and materialism, were partly to blame. Nevertheless, some solid achievements were made during the period which should be recounted.<sup>20</sup>

The Methodists and Baptists continued to be the strongest groups. Metho-

\* From 1891 to 1913 Knoxville College included the Industrial Department (for Negroes) of the University of Tennessee, since the so-called "Second Morrill Act" of Congress, passed in 1890, prohibited racial discrimination in the use of additional funds appropriated. Beginning in 1881 when the state legislature included four Negro representatives, colored "state students," appointed by these and other legislators and entitled to free tuition at the University of Tennessee were educated at Fisk and other Negro colleges and universities at state expense. When the Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial Normal School (now University) was established at Nashville under the normal school act of 1909, all land grant college funds allocated by the state for Negro education were transferred from the University of Tennessee to that institution. Stanley J. Folmsbee, "The University of Tennessee, 1879-1887" (unpublished manuscript in possession of Professor Folmsbee), Chapter 3.

\*\* During the quadrennium of 1874-1878, the "average monthly salary of teachers" was \$30.74. Twenty-five years later the figure was \$30.87.





(Willard Smith, Photographer)

*Athens—Merner Pfeiffer Library, Tennessee Wesleyan College*

dists, however, were hindered throughout the period by friction between those of the Northern and Southern factions.\* Especially in East Tennessee was the bitterness rife, but disagreements existed also in other parts of the state. After the Civil War Parson Brownlow tried to force members of the Southern church back into the "loyal" group. When many refused, the preacher-politician urged

\* It will be recalled that the Methodist Episcopal Church divided sectionally in 1845. After that time (until the reunion in 1939) the Southern church was known as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

returning soldiers to commit acts of violence against members of the Southern church and to intimidate their ministers. Some preachers were beaten, and many could not hold services in their churches. The Southern group retaliated. They charged that the Northern church was radical, political, and abolitionist. It was composed of "grand thieves and rascals" who sought "negro-equality," and thus became unfit for honest members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to join. Members of the Ku Klux Klan took a hand and ordered all "Carpet bag" preachers from the state. Despite the schism, Methodist leaders added members to the fold and retained state leadership. Shortly after the turn of the century nearly 200,000 persons were communicants of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Northern Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, the Free Methodist Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church of North America, claimed another 50,000.<sup>21</sup>

Baptists also made decided gains. Like the Methodists, they had divided sectionally before the war. Shortly after 1900 the Southern Baptist Convention claimed 160,000 members and was second only to the Methodists. Other groups, including the Primitive Baptists, the Free Will Baptists, the Northern Baptist Convention, the Regular Baptists, the General Baptists, the Duck River and Kindred Association of Baptists (sometimes called the Baptist Church of Christ), and the Two-Seed-in-the-Spirit Baptists, claimed 22,000 members.<sup>22</sup>

At the beginning of the war the Presbyterian church divided into Northern and Southern branches, and the latter adopted the name "Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America." After the war Southerners accepted the name "Presbyterian Church in the United States," as distinguished from the Northern group who continued to employ the name "Presbyterian Church in the United States of America." The strongest of the Presbyterian bodies in Tennessee was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which had seceded from the main Presbyterian branch in 1810. By the turn of the century Presbyterians of all kinds in the state numbered 75,000, including the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Associated Reform Synod of the South, in addition to those named. The Cumberland group composed about one-half of that number.<sup>23</sup>

One group formed during the period deserves especial attention, inasmuch as its membership centered mainly in Tennessee, and it grew, within a relatively short time, to rival the dominant Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians in all sections of the state. This group, known as the Church of Christ, was the conservative wing of the Disciples of Christ discussed in an earlier chapter. Even before the Civil War dissension developed among the Disciples, but not until 1906 did the Bureau of the Census list separately the "Churches of Christ." The Disciples of Christ, it will be remembered, were organized by Alexander Campbell and Barton Stone in an effort to avoid doctrinal and creedal statements. Campbell and his father, Thomas, became disgusted with the sectarian nature of the many Protestant groups, each with a separate Biblical interpretation

and creed, and they determined to restore Christianity in its pristine pureness. They sought to avoid denominationalism by avoiding dogmas; they would speak only "where the Scriptures speak."

The first three decades (1809-1840) of Campbell's ministry were years of iconoclasm; he opposed "denominations," creeds, missionary societies, and "organizations." After 1840, however, he developed a more progressive outlook. For two years he even served as president of the American Christian Missionary Society (1849-1850). He became less antagonistic, and, although he did not accept other denominations, he did become more tolerant of them. The personality of Campbell changed to such an extent that one scholar has written of "two" Alexander Campbells, while another suggested in an article written for the Census Bureau in 1936 that Campbell was not "the same man mentally." Campbell's inconsistencies, then, became bases for disputes within the church.<sup>24</sup>

Even before the Civil War a half dozen factions developed within the group, having as their main points of disagreement the use of instrumental music in the churches, the support of organized missions, and "organization" within the churches. Organized missionary activity was first to cause disagreement, but soon after mid-century instrumental music became an important issue. To the "progressive" members an organ embellished the services and provided a worshipful atmosphere; to the "conservatives," however, organs were "instruments of Satan." Editors of the *Millennial Harbinger* searched the books of the New Testament and, finding that "instrumental music is not . . . authorized," concluded that its use in churches was "not legitimate." Editors of *Lard's Quarterly* advised brethren that they should "withdraw from the church" if an organ were used.<sup>25</sup>

Nashville became a center of conservative reaction shortly after the Civil War. There, David Lipscomb, a gifted writer and spirited preacher, edited a conservative periodical with a wide circulation called the *Gospel Advocate*. Through this publication Lipscomb and others of like persuasion drew the lines more closely. Various points of disagreement developed, but basically they could be narrowed to instrumental music and "organizations" or "societies." Missionary and Sunday School organizations were not scripturally approved, and conservatives made "various and earnest efforts" to dissuade Christians from this "departure from New Testament Christianity." Efforts to bind the churches into a centralized group met with Lipscomb's condemnation. "Decrees of Associations, Conferences, Synod, . . . and Romish councils" were unscriptural; therefore any "meeting" which attempted to make recommendations to the churches was "an improper assumption of power and authority" for which "we find no authority in the Bible," Lipscomb concluded.<sup>26</sup>

The instrumental music question became a burning issue. By the 1880's many of the city congregations of all faiths had introduced organ music into their worship services. This was true of the liberal, or "progressive," congregations of the Disciples. "The instrument of Satan" was condemned by conserva-



tives, however, and as a result, many of the congregations, especially in Chattanooga and Nashville, were divided. Both groups continued under the name of "Disciples" or "Christians" for awhile, but the conservative group soon adopted the name "Church of Christ." At the turn of the century the majority of the Church of Christ membership centered in Tennessee. The number of members in the Volunteer State, 41,411, was more than three times that of Kentucky and Alabama. Of the eight adjacent states—Arkansas, Missouri, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi—the total membership of all combined did not exceed that of Tennessee.<sup>27</sup>

Many other groups, of various sizes, also were present in the state. Among them were the Protestant Episcopal, Lutheran, Catholic, Disciple or Christian, Church of God, and Church of the Nazarene. The last two named were formed near the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup>

Separate Negro Churches were established soon after the Civil War. The vast majority of the freedmen became Methodists or Baptists. Before the war the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, claimed a Negro membership of over 200,000. After the war the majority of them became members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Some 60,000, however, joined the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America, which was organized at Jackson, Tennessee, in 1870. At the turn of the century this group led all other Negro churches in membership in Tennessee, but the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church also had sizable followings. Several Baptist Negro congregations were formed even before the war. In Nashville the first Baptist Church, Colored, was established before 1850. The Beale Street Baptist Church, of Memphis, was one of the largest Negro groups formed after 1865. By the turn of the century several divisions had occurred, but still the parent church could claim thousands of members. By 1906 the National Baptist Convention had 759 Negro congregations in Tennessee. In addition, the Primitive Baptists and others claimed Negro churches and missions. Several other denominations, smaller in size, had Negro members. The Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized in Tennessee, having been formed at Murfreesboro in 1869. By 1906, seventy-nine Colored Cumberland Presbyterian congregations had been established in the state. Other denominations sponsoring Negro churches included the following: Presbyterian Church in the United States, United Presbyterian Church, Associated Reformed Synod of the South, Churches of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Church of the Living God, Seventh Day Adventist, Adventist Christian Church, and Roman Catholic.<sup>29</sup>

*Women's Rights Movement*—Although American leaders of the woman suffrage movement did not achieve their goal until August, 1920, when the Tennessee legislature ratified the Susan B. Anthony (Nineteenth) Amendment, many had been active for over a century. During the first half of the nineteenth century feminist activity was confined almost entirely to the Northern states.

Not until after the Civil War was it introduced into the more conservative South.<sup>30</sup>

A. Elizabeth Taylor, in a careful study of the women's movement in Tennessee, has observed that feminist agitation probably began in the state in August, 1876, when Mrs. Napoleon Cromwell, of Mississippi, addressed the Democratic gubernatorial convention in Nashville. "Woman is as free by nature as man," Mrs. Cromwell told Tennesseans, who at first received her with both laughter and applause. Playing upon an issue with which she could reach every Democrat in the convention, she deplored the fact that while Negro men could vote, the mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters of the men assembled could not. She thus urged the unity of the white race by enfranchising women. Even the race issue could not break the barrier, however, and her request that Democrats endorse woman suffrage met only with laughter and scorn from those assembled.<sup>31</sup>

Mrs. Cromwell's appearance apparently was an isolated incident, and more than a decade elapsed before Tennesseans manifested much interest in women's rights. In 1885 Mrs. Elizabeth Lyle Saxon was appointed by leaders of the National Woman Suffrage Association as state president for Tennessee, but she moved from the state in 1886 before any steps were taken to organize a state chapter. Two years later Memphians organized a woman suffrage league with forty-five members. Mrs. Lida A. Meriwether, who for the next two decades was the most outstanding suffragette in the state, was elected president. Other groups soon were formed in Nashville, Maryville, and elsewhere, but leaders met with little encouragement generally. Although Mrs. Meriwether toured much of the state during the summer of 1895, she could claim in December, 1895, only five organizations and total membership of only 128. However, she had secured endorsements of her goals by 535 women and had sponsored the appearances in Memphis of Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt, two of the country's leading feminists.<sup>32</sup>

The century closed with a flurry of activity on the part of a few determined leaders. Mrs. Meriwether staged a state suffrage convention in Nashville in May, 1897, where delegates heard leaders from Kentucky, Alabama, and elsewhere. During the convention Mrs. Meriwether organized a group called the Tennessee Equal Rights Association. Five months later the National Council of Women of the United States met in Nashville and heard Susan B. Anthony pledge that she "would not rest until a woman's name stood for as much as a man's name [and] until a woman's opinion was worth as much as a man's . . . ." In 1900 delegates of the Tennessee Equal Rights Association convened in Memphis. There, they heard Carrie Chapman Catt denounce all who supported the concept of inequality of rights for men and women.<sup>33</sup>

Customs of long standing are not easily overturned and, as was to be expected, the feminists met with considerable opposition. Some of the most caustic critics were newspaper editors, women, and ministers. The editor of the Nashville

*American*, for example, in 1887 described feminist agitation as a movement "which proposes . . . a radical and fundamental change in the theory and policy of government." Editors were quick to publish statements by "disloyal" women who contended that "woman's place was in the home." Ministers, such as the Reverend N. M. Woods, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, frequently urged women to remain in their "place" if they did not wish to violate the will of God. Mrs. Meriwether usually countered their arguments—especially those of "disloyal" women—with spirited replies. Mrs. Bettie M. Doneison, of Nashville, wrote in retrospect that "it required a woman of strong purpose and heart to be counted as a suffragist and brave the caricatures from the artists' pencils, and the malicious and undeserved reproach from the pens of editors and literary critics." Despite discouragement, feminists, at the threshold of the twentieth century, could point to some solid achievements during the preceding two decades, and looked with confidence to the future.<sup>34</sup>

*The Prohibition Movement, 1870-1900*—In the summer of 1878 the following newspaper article was reprinted from the *Lewisburg Gazette* in various papers of the state:

Over forty years ago twelve boys in Henry County, Tennessee, were warmly attached to one another. The joys of one were the joys of all . . . Seven of them endorsed the doctrine [of Prohibition] and resolved never to drink alcoholic liquor as a beverage. The others refused and continued to drink. This history has a sequel which deserves consideration. The five boys who continued to drink all now fill drunkards' graves. Not so with the seven who resolved never to drink. O. B. Hicks has been a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for forty years. Thomas and Richard Randle both died Presiding Elders in the same church. William E. Travis is today a member of the Tennessee legislature. [J. D.?] Clinton Atkins is one of the leading spirits of the United States Congress. James D. Porter today is the popular governor of Tennessee, and Isham G. Harris has twice been elected governor of this state . . . Boys who read this item of history, true history, note it we pray you, try and profit by it, and may God help you.<sup>35</sup>

This statement, perhaps true in all its facts but false in its implications, serves to illustrate some of the prohibition literature of the time. In an earlier chapter we have sketched the progress of prohibition leaders to 1860. After the disturbing years of war and reconstruction, the old temperance organizations expanded their activities and some new ones were added.<sup>36</sup>

During the first decade after reconstruction, the Sons of Temperance, the Tennessee Order of Good Templars, and the Friends of Temperance were among the more vociferous prohibitionists. Numerous newspaper stories, such as that mentioned above, were published, and stage productions, the most



popular of which was *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, kept the question before the people. Numerous petitions and several bills calling for prohibition came before the legislature, and in 1877 a significant law was passed. Known as the "Four Mile Law," the enactment made unlawful the marketing of intoxicating beverages within four miles of an incorporated institution of learning. Exempted were retailers in incorporated towns, persons holding unexpired licenses, and wholesalers. A Tennessee branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was founded in 1882, and this organization became exceedingly active.<sup>37</sup>

The combined efforts of the various organizations brought forth agitation in the 1880's for a prohibition amendment to the state constitution. In 1885 Senator John H. McDowell of Obion County, an agrarian leader mentioned earlier, pushed through the legislature a joint resolution calling for prohibition. As required by the constitution, the proposal was submitted to the legislature two years later and received the constitutionally required two-thirds majority; then it was submitted to the people. There the measure failed, however, by a vote of 135,197 to 117,504. The defeat did not dampen the hopes of temperance leaders, however, and led to their entrance into politics. It actually added impetus to the women's movement, as feminist leaders loudly asserted that the measure would have passed comfortably had women voted. Furthermore, it brought forth a flurry of bills before the legislature and ordinances before city and town councils. In 1899 legislators granted local option to all incorporated towns having a population of less than 2,000.<sup>38</sup>

The Prohibition party of Tennessee was organized in 1887 and continued to be a factor in state politics for a decade. Gubernatorial candidates were nominated in several campaigns, as mentioned in preceding chapters. The Prohibition platform generally demanded the total abolition of the manufacture and sale of liquor in both rural and urban areas of the state. In 1894 Republicans inserted a prohibition plank in their platform, in an obvious effort to woo the temperance group.<sup>39</sup>

While not attaining their ultimate goal during the period here under consideration, the temperance advocates of Tennessee did lay solid groundwork for those who carried the fight into the twentieth century. The nineteenth century leaders deserved considerable credit for the law of 1909 which added Tennessee to the rapidly expanding list of dry states.<sup>40</sup>

*Social Experiments*—Grace Sloan, in explaining the unsettled conditions of the post bellum period, has referred to the state of Tennessee as a "social and economic laboratory."<sup>41</sup> Specifically, she has discussed the colonies of Gruetli, Rugby, and Ruskin as examples of utopian dreams in an era of confusion. Gruetli, in Grundy County, had been established during the 1840's by a handful of Swiss settlers. Economically, each householder was an independent producer, but otherwise there was a strong tendency toward a cooperative society. Near the turn of the century a newspaper editor found the colony "like a part of

a foreign country," and consisting of wood carvers, gardeners, and producers of fine wines. Rugby has been a subject not infrequently exploited by historians and literators. Thomas Hughes, author of *Tom Brown's School Days* and other books for boys, opened Rugby (in the northern part of Morgan County), in October, 1880. He thought of it as a haven for young British yeomen "with good education and small capital, the class which of all others is most overcrowded in England at this time . . ." The rising generation, tired of getting, spending, and laying waste their powers, would establish a "kingdom" in the virgin forests of America where they would enjoy high thinking and plain living. Hughes, a dreamer, conceived of a society in which the humblest members living by the "labour of their own hands, would be of such strain and culture that they would be able to meet princes in the gate without embarrassment and self-assertion." Within a few years the colony of "enchanted solitude" in the Cumberland Plateau had failed, largely because of lack of businesslike methods in administering the affairs of the settlement.<sup>42</sup>

While much has been written of Rugby, the story of Ruskin until recently has remained confined largely in the files of *The Coming Nation* and the records of the chancery court clerk at Charlotte. For this reason, and because of our limited space, Ruskin will be discussed in more detail than Gruetli and Rugby.

Plans for the socialist colony of Ruskin originated in the fertile brain of Charles Augustus Wayland, a self-styled "grass roots Socialist" described by one Marxian historian as "the greatest propagandist of Socialism that has ever lived."<sup>43</sup> Wayland began publication of *The Coming Nation*, his chief propagandizing instrument at Greensburg, Indiana, in April, 1893. Soon thereafter, he claimed a wide circulation among the discontented classes of the North and West. A newspaper was not enough, however; Wayland dreamed of establishing a colony where he could practice his ideas of cooperative living. After a survey of available land, he finally decided upon a plot in Middle Tennessee. Joyfully, he announced on July 21, 1894, that "The next issue [of *The Coming Nation*] will be published from Tennessee City."<sup>44</sup>

Wayland's advance agents already had been in Tennessee for some time and had purchased one thousand acres for \$2.50 per acre. The land was located in Dickson County, about fifty miles west of Nashville, on the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad. Wayland offered malcontents charter memberships if they would secure for him 200 newspaper subscriptions; or they could become members by paying \$500. Despite widespread interest claimed by propagandists, the colony never had more than 100 members. Three days after Wayland's arrival about two dozen workers from diverse areas representing different trades congregated.<sup>45</sup>

Wayland named the colony Ruskin Cooperative Association, after the English author, John Ruskin. Needless to say, Ruskin's works were standard reading for both the colonists and the occasional visitors. They found a com-

plete set of the English author's works, autographed, in the community library, along with Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* and Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. Wayland, who hoped to establish an agrarian paradise, was pleased that the settlement was located so far away from the noise of cities. He believed that hard work and cooperative living would secure the blessings of the "good life," and he entered into his experiment with considerable energy. He had only contempt, however, for the "lazy natives," whom one colonist described as "long, lank, lean Micawbers who had been waiting over forty years for the ground to turn itself up and raise its own crop."<sup>46</sup>

Although Wayland departed in 1895, interest in socialism did not subside. The colonists tilled the soil, raised livestock, and manufactured a variety of items, including lumber, flour, chewing gum, suspenders, and patent medicine—not so much to make money, but to secure funds with which to publicize socialism. In addition to *The Coming Nation*, they published and distributed many leaflets, tracts, and pamphlets. Typical of their comments are the following:

Chattel slavery debauched the nation . . . but wage slavery has . . . debauched everything. Great corporations buy and sell Congress as so many slaves. They pile up wealth unheard of under wage slavery . . . they defy the constitution, courts, or any other power . . . They debauch every legislature to elect to the United States Senate members of their corporations . . . Millions are annually taxed from our people . . . The rich don't care—they can reduce wages to pay taxes . . . Will another Lincoln rise up to lead the people to the abolition of wage slavery?

Every strike has been met with military force by the corporations . . . The men [should] quit striking and go to voting. By their ballots cast for men who hate private monopolies, the men can control every court and soldiers and militia and use them against the corporations.<sup>47</sup>

Schools but no churches were maintained. In 1897 colonists even laid the cornerstone for "The College of the New Economy," but such an institution did not materialize. Colony leaders condemned religion as a tool of the wealthy used to keep the laborers satisfied with their lowly state in life. Arguing that man could not worship when hungry, Wayland wrote, "Man can approach Christ—can realize the Christian ideal only through his spiritual nature after his material nature is satisfied." On another occasion he wrote, "our own churches have no sympathy for the down-trodden, but sustain a system that makes paupers of millions."<sup>48</sup>

Internal dissension, which began a few months after the group assembled, finally spelled the doom of the colony. In 1899 suit was filed which resulted in the dissolution of the socialist experiment. A majority of the members remained together and moved their few remaining assets, including *The Coming Nation*, to Ware County, Georgia, where they pledged themselves to continue their communal living, but they resolved to develop more industry and de-emphasize



agriculture. Some of the members remained in Tennessee, and a few migrated to Northern cities.<sup>49</sup>

Numerous appraisals of the fallen colony have been made. J. W. Braam, writing in 1903 in the *American Journal of Sociology*, believed that failure was not the result of any inherent decadence of socialism, but rather that failure stemmed from the colonists' utter lack of experience in business matters and the gross extravagances of the leaders. The editor of the Nashville *American* also pointed to defects in leadership. The editor of the Nashville *Banner* saw in the colony "a commendable and harmless enterprise, which . . . lacked the substantial conditions for success." He believed that "the socialistic cooperative community plan" was for dreamers who were devoid of "practicality." Professor Isaac Broome, a member of the colony, published a small book in 1903 in which he also pointed to the incompetence and extravagance of the leaders. A daughter of one of the settlers wrote a half century after the dissolution that the colony

was an attempt at carrying out one economic order in a limited sphere, surrounded by and under the general laws, of an entirely different economic order . . . . It was a matter of the impossibility of any community living under two irreconcilable laws at the same time.<sup>50</sup>

Editors of *The Coming Nation*, while admitting that they had made mistakes, promised to continue propagandizing for "the great reform movement shaking the world at its very center." In one of the last issues published in Tennessee they called upon socialists everywhere to "reason and plan together for the future."<sup>51</sup>

*The Tennessee Centennial Exposition*—Perhaps the greatest extravaganza Tennesseans had ever witnessed began at noon on May 1, 1897, when President William McKinley pressed a button in Washington and officially opened the gates in Nashville to the Tennessee Centennial Exposition. For six months thereafter people from over the world viewed the real and the fancied. Preparations, proceeding at a torrid pace in 1896, were not complete on the hundredth anniversary of Tennessee's statehood. All officials could do on June 1, 1896, was to open and dedicate Centennial Park and to announce hopefully that the celebration would begin in the following spring.<sup>52</sup>

The "centennial dream" may have originated in the mind of Douglas Anderson, a prominent Nashvillian. In 1892 Anderson wrote letters to editors of various newspapers and suggested that preparations be made immediately for a celebration to be held in 1896. He proposed that six cities—Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis, Columbia, and Jackson—compete for the privilege of staging it. For two years the idea "existed on oral wind and printers' puffs," Anderson later wrote, but in 1894 Nashvillians, who in 1880 had staged a successful performance in celebration of the hundredth anniversary of their city, began to prepare in earnest for the exposition. A "Centennial Association" was or-

ganized which, among other things, sought to arouse interest in Tennessee history. Educators added Tennessee history to the curriculum of studies in elementary schools, which did much to create interest in the exposition. Shortly before opening day, Professor R. L. C. White prepared a list of one hundred questions on Tennessee history, which he called his "Centennial Dream." He published the questions in newspapers and offered rewards for correct answers. The Association published an *Official Guide to the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition and City of Nashville*, which described in detail the wonders visitors could see. Readers of the *Guide* had their attention called to a "six-day tour" that featured displays in the Mineral and Forestry Buildings, the Parthenon, Little Egypt, Vanity Fair, and the like. Hotel rates for room and board were quoted at from two to four dollars per day, carfare was five cents, and individual meals cost twenty-five cents.<sup>53</sup>

On opening day thousands of visitors heard the usual bursts of oratory and cannon, after which they viewed the great and the majestic, the weird and the fantastic. Once inside the exposition grounds, visitors might walk along winding, graveled roads bordered by buildings, beautiful flowers, fountains, and lakes. Most of the buildings were of wood, but plastered in such a manner as to appear to be pale gray stone. The Parthenon, however, which occupied the most conspicuous site on the grounds, was of permanent construction. A replica of the Athenian building, the Parthenon housed an extensive art exhibit. Nearby stood the Erechtheum, a reproduction of the building on the Acropolis of Athens, which was devoted to historical relics. There, as two historians wrote just after the turn of the century, Robert T. Quarles and G. P. Thruston "displayed the most remarkable collection of State historical relics that has, perhaps, ever been exhibited." In other buildings was exhibited what Gentry R. McGee termed "a marvelous array of almost everything to be found in a civilized country." The finest specimens of timber, iron, coal, stone, and other minerals were on display. Another building housed vehicles from wooden-wheeled ox carts to "the most elegant and elaborate palace cars." Laces, other textiles, jewelry, firearms and ammunition, and a variety of items could be seen.<sup>54</sup>

"Vanity Fair, so replete with strange people, strange sights, and strange noises," could be enjoyed in its entirety for \$5.90. Within this section of the exposition were reproductions of the streets of Cairo, a Chinese village, a plantation with "slaves," and a "Colorado gold mine"; in addition were side-show men who clamored for all to see "the greatest show on earth."<sup>55</sup>

The musical presentations provided one of the highlights of the exposition. On many occasions the large pipe organ in the auditorium, a novelty to some visitors, could be heard. Many vocalists and choruses, including the Fisk Jubilee Singers, entertained thousands. Bands and orchestras always attracted large audiences, and among the more famous aggregations that played in Nashville were the Marine Band of Cincinnati, the "Legion Band," the "Prohibition Band," the Centennial Orchestra, and Victor Herbert and his Twenty-Second Regiment

Band of New York. The latter was well received and wildly cheered; listeners claimed that Herbert played Verdi and Stephen Foster with equal skill and feeling. When the New York artists departed, a group of Nashvillians followed them to the train as though they were reluctant to permit such talent to leave Tennessee.<sup>56</sup>

Hundreds of thousands had viewed the spectacular and the bazaar when the exposition closed on November 1. As Gentry R. McGee wrote two years later,

When the first blasts of November winds were scattering the fallen leaves the grand exposition closed. It had been one of the most successful and creditable ever undertaken and carried out by a single state. Every department had shown the wonderful progress of the state since her pioneer days, and the creation and management of the great exhibit had shown the genius and energy of the men and women who had charge of its fortunes.<sup>57</sup>

General Albert Sidney Johnston, who thirty-five years earlier had called vainly for a few Nashville-owned slaves to assist him in constructing Forts Donelson and Henry, would not have thought Nashvillians capable of such a display of energy. Nor would General John B. Hood's barefoot men who trudged hopelessly into the capital only three decades earlier have recognized the Davidson County seat. The Exposition truly was Tennessee's greatest contribution to the gilded age.

#### CHAPTER XXXII—NOTES

1. Vernon L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought* (3 vols., New York, 1927), III, 48, 169; Morison and Commager, *Growth of American Republic*, II, 271.
2. *House Journal*, 1865, pp. 20-34; *Public Acts*, 1866-67, Chap. XXVII, 33-48; Williams., "John Eaton, Jr.," 304 ff.; White, *Tennessee Educational Organization*, 85 ff. For a thorough study of education in the post bellum days, see *ibid.*, Chaps. IV-VII.
3. *Public Acts*, 1869-70, Chap. XXXIII, 41-42; CX, 129-31; 2 sess., Chap. XXIV, 99-113.
4. *Nashville Tennessee Tribune*, March 6, 1871; *Senate Journal*, 1 extra sess., 1872, Appendix, 16, 31, 46, 77. The entire Killebrew report is published in *ibid.*, 21-72.
5. *Public Acts*, 1873, Chap. XXV, 39-51; Amos Leo Gentry, "The Public Career of Leonidas Campbell Houk" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1939), 31-32.
6. *Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1875* (Nashville, 1875), including reports from county superintendents as follows: H. C. Boyd, Carter County, 56; R. S. Thompson, Crockett County, 56; Ellis Cocke, Hawkins County, 63; John R. Dean, Bedford County, 80; V. C. Allen, Meigs County, 68; L. L. Leech, Dickson County, 98; James M. Porterfield, Decatur County, 99; J. L. Trapp, DeKalb County, 99-100; William Harrison, Dyer County, 100-01; and Stephen H. Pyle, Fentress County, 102. See also page 12. *Ibid.*, 1874, p. 18;



- The Nation*, XXIV (1877), 276-77; Edgar Knight, *Public Education in the South* (Boston, 1922), 309; *Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Education*, 1860 (Washington, 1860), 18 ff.
7. *Public Acts*, 1889, Chap. XVII, 213; 1891, Chap. CXXXII, 295-96; Chap. XXXV, 70; 1895, Chap. XIV, 70-71; 1897, Chap. XXXVI, 163-65; 1899, Chap. CCV, 423-34; White, *Tennessee Educational Organization*, 141. The State Board of Education had been established in 1875. *Public Acts*, 1875, Chap. XC, p. 126.
  8. *Pulaski Citizen*, September 4, 1873; *Report of State Superintendent*, 1877, p. 12.
  9. *Ibid.*, 1888, p. 45; 1884, p. 12; 1882, pp. 31-33; 1892, p. 212.
  10. Lecture by C. D. Elliott, undated manuscript in Elliott Collection, State Library; *Tennessee School Journal*, I (No. 4, 1874), 24; *Report of State Superintendent*, 1874, pp. 26, 28, 29; *Congressional Record*, 1874, pp. 1012, 1870, 2013; *Columbia Herald*, November 24, 1892. See also Joseph C. Kiger, "Social Thought as Voiced in Rural Middle Tennessee Newspapers, 1878-1898," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, IX (June, 1950), 134-35.
  11. *Report of State Superintendent*, 1888, p. 172; *Savannah Courier*, September 24, 1885; *Clarksville Semi-Weekly Tobacco Leaf*, June 20, 1884; *Columbia Herald*, August 28, 1891.
  12. McRaven, *Nashville*, 117; *Bulletin of George Peabody College*, New Series, IX (April, 1959), 25-26; W. R. Garrett, "The Genesis of the Peabody College for Teachers," *American Historical Magazine*, VIII (January, 1903), 14-25; H. M. Doak, "The Development of Education in Tennessee," *ibid.* (January, 1903), 87; Isabel Howell, "Montgomery Bell Academy: A Chapter in the History of the University of Nashville" (M.A. thesis, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1940), 57-85.
  13. McRaven, *Nashville*, 118; Doak, "Education in Tennessee," 88; Edwin Mims, *History of Vanderbilt University* (Nashville, 1946), 13, 85, 95, 97, 98; *Official Guide to Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition and City of Nashville* (Nashville, 1897), 89. For biographies of Bishop McTyeire and Chancellor Kirkland, see John J. Tigert, IV, *Bishop Holland Nimmons McTyeire, Ecclesiastical and Educational Architect* (Nashville, 1955), especially chapters XIII-XVI; and Edwin Mims, *Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt* (Nashville, 1940).
  14. Rule, *Knoxville*, 361-63, 367; Folmsbee, *East Tennessee University*, 71-87; *The University of Tennessee General Catalogue*, LXI (May, 1958), 9 ff.; Clyde Conley Street, "A History of Legal Education in Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1941), 64; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 712; James R. Montgomery, *The University of Tennessee Builds for the Twentieth Century* (Knoxville, 1957), 8-9.
  15. Gilbert E. Govan and James W. Livingood, *The University of Chattanooga: Sixty Years* (Chattanooga, 1947), 27, 53, 63-73, 107 ff.; LeRoy Albert Martin, *A History of Tennessee Wesleyan College, 1857-1957* (Athens, 1957), *passim*.
  16. *Bulletin of the University of the South*, LII (Sewanee, 1958), 7-11; Arthur Benjamin Chitty, Jr., *Reconstruction at Sewanee* (Sewanee, 1932), *passim*.
  17. Bone, *Cumberland University*, 103 ff. One of the best known preparatory schools in the nation was established at Bell Buckle in Bedford County and operated by the dean of prep school principals, Sawney Webb. See a son's characterization of his father in William R. Webb, Jr., "Sawney Webb: My Father and His Ideals of Education," *Sewanee Review*, L (April-June, 1942), 227-40. See also Edd Winfield Parks, "Sawney Webb: Tennessee's Schoolmaster," *North Carolina Historical Review*, XII (July, 1935), 233-51.
  18. A. A. Taylor, "Fisk University and the Nashville Community, 1866-1900," *Journal of Negro History*, XXIX (April, 1954), 111-26; McRaven, *Nashville*, 118-19; *Public Acts*, House Joint Resolution No. XXXVIII, 374; Nashville

- Daily Press and Times*, August 31, 1867; Lewis G. Jordan, *Negro Baptist History, 1750-1930* (Nashville, 1930), 295; Rule, *Knoxville*, 393; J. Winfield Qualls, "The Beginnings and Early History of the Lemoyne School at Memphis," *W.T. H.S. Papers*, VII (1953), 10. For various accounts of performances of the Jubilee Singers, see Scrapbooks in Negro Collection, Fisk University Library, Nashville.
19. White, *Tennessee Educational Organization*, table IV, between pp. 156 and 157.
  20. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 820-21.
  21. W. B. Hesseltine, "Methodism and Reconstruction in East Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 3 (1931), 42-61; Allen James Ledford, "Methodism in Tennessee, 1783-1866" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1941), 112; *Religious Bodies* (2 vols., Washington, 1941), II, 1082-1172.
  22. *Ibid.*, I, 195-238; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 813-14, 816.
  23. *Ibid.*, 812-13, 817; *Religious Bodies*, II, 1381-1476. Toward the end of the period leaders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America warmly discussed union. In 1906 a merger was effected, but it was only partly successful since nearly half of the Cumberland Presbyterian membership refused assent to union and continued as a separate denomination.
  24. Edward Coffman, "The Division in the Restoration Movement" (M.A. thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1930), 19, 20, 52 ff.; statement by Leslie G. Thomas, a minister of the Church of Christ at Dickson, in *Religious Bodies*, II, 469. For a statement concerning the early development of the Disciples of Christ, see Chapter 22.
  25. Elmer T. Clark, *The Small Sects in America* (New York, 1949), 213-16.
  26. Coffman, "Restoration Movement," 52 ff.; *Religious Bodies*, I, 469; *Gospel Advocate* XVI (October 29, 1874), 1019-21.
  27. Coffman, "Restoration Movement," 58 ff., 90; Clark, *Small Sects*, 214-15; *Gospel Advocate*, XXXIII (January 14, 1891), 23; *Religious Bodies*, I, 465.
  28. *Ibid.*, I, 406, 453; II, 912, 1481, 1533. Tennesseans, regardless of their denominational affiliation, generally were tolerant of all religious groups. Two examples of intolerance may be cited, however. For a discussion of persecutions of Seventh Day Adventists in West Tennessee because they worked on Sunday, see James Joiner, "Sunday Laws in Tennessee" (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1954), 29 ff. For persecutions of Mormons in Middle Tennessee, see Marshall Wingfield, "Tennessee's Mormon Massacre," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII, (March, 1958), 19-36.
  28. *Ibid.*, I, 406, 453; II, 912, 1481, 1533.
  29. Thomas O. Fuller, *History of the Negro Baptists of Tennessee* (Memphis, 1936), 2, 71-74; *Report of State Superintendent*, 1900, 308; *Nashville Union and American*, January 3, 1871; Lucius H. Holsey, *Autobiography, Sermons, Addresses and Essays* (Atlanta, 1898), 217 ff.; *Religious Bodies*, I, 479-81, 537-38, 560; James W. Hood, *One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: or, The Centennial of African Methodism* (New York, 1905), 336 ff.; Daniel A. Payne, *History of African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, 1897), 471-72; Charles H. Phillips, *The History of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in America: Comprising its Organization, Subsequent Development and Present Status* (Jackson, Tenn., 1898) *passim*; *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church*, 1869 (Nashville, 1869), 39.
  30. A. Elizabeth Taylor, "The Woman Suffrage Movement in Tennessee" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1943), 8; *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Tennessee* (New York, 1957), 15; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 717.

31. Taylor, *Woman Suffrage Movement*, 15-16.
32. *Ibid.*, 16-17, 17-19, 20; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 717-18.
33. *Ibid.*, 718; Taylor, *Woman Suffrage Movement*, 20-22, 23; quotation in *ibid.*, 23.
34. *Ibid.*, 18, 19-20, 23-24; Nashville *American*, November 21, 1887; Susan B. Anthony and Ida H. Harper, *The History of Woman Suffrage* (4 vols., Rochester, 1902), IV, 927-28.
35. Pulaski *Citizen*, June 20, 1878.
36. Grace Leab, "Tennessee Temperance Activities, 1870-1899," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 21 (1949), 53.
37. McRaven, *Nashville*, 150; *Public Acts*, 1877, Chap. XXIII, 37; Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 735; Leab, "Tennessee Temperance Activities," 60; Joiner, "Sunday Laws," 50.
38. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 704; Leab, "Tennessee Temperance Activities," 63-64, 67; *Public Acts*, 1887, Chap. LXXXVI, 167-69; *Senate Journal*, 1885, pp. 79, 321; *House Journal*, 1897, pp. 541, 1003; *Public Acts*, 1899, Chap. CCXXI, p. 474. The Peeler Act of 1899 prohibited the sale of intoxicants in towns of 2,000 population or less incorporated after the passage of the law. Existing towns could exercise local option by voting to abolish their charters and reincorporate.
39. Lewis, "Election of 1894," 110-11.
40. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 705.
41. Grace Sloan, "Tennessee: Social and Economic Laboratory," *Sewanee Review*, XLVI (January-March, April-June, July-September, 1938), 36-44, 158-66, 312-36.
42. Sloan, "Tennessee," 39-44, 160-66; Marguerite B. Hamer, "Thomas Hughes and His American Rugby," *North Carolina Historical Review*, V (October, 1928), 390 ff.; "The Correspondence of Thomas Hughes Concerning His Rugby," *ibid.*, XXI (July, 1944), 203-14; W. H. G. Armytage, "New Light on the English Background of Thomas Hughes' Rugby Colony in Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 21 (1949), 69-84. See also Ernest I. Miller, *The English Settlement at Rugby, Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1941), and Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee: Being an Account of the Settlement Founded on the Cumberland Plateau* (London, 1881).
43. A. M. Simons, "J. A. Wayland, Propagandist," *Metropolitan Magazine*, XXXII (1913), 25. See also Howard H. Quint, *The Forging of American Socialism* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1953).
44. *The Coming Nation*, No. 35, December 30, 1893; No. 64, July 21, 1894; No. 101, April 27, 1895.
45. Charles H. Kegel (ed.), "Earl Miller's 'Recollections of the Ruskin Cooperative Association,'" *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XVII (March, 1958), 48-49; Records of the Register, Dickson County, Deed Book Y, 339; Sloan, "Tennessee," 315.
46. *Coming Nation*, No. 181, November 7, 1896; No. 218, July 27, 1897.
47. *Ibid.*, No. 181, November 7, 1896; No. 89, February 2, 1895; No. 90, February 9, 1895; No. 100, April 20, 1895.
48. *Ibid.*, No. 93, March 2, 1895; No. 85, January 5, 1895.
49. Records of the Clerk and Master of Chancery Court, Dickson County, Charlotte, Tennessee; Corlew, *Dickson County*, 147-52; Nashville *American*, July 27, 1899.
50. *Ibid.*; Nashville *Banner*, July 27, 1899; Letter from Mrs. Irene Charlesworth Johnson to writer, September 9, 1955; J. W. Braam, "The Ruskin Cooperative Colony," *American Journal of Sociology* VIII (March, 1903), 667-80; Isaac Broome, *The Last Days of the Ruskin Cooperative Association* (Chicago, 1902), 168.
51. *Coming Nation*, No. 330, September 16, 1899.



52. McRaven, *Nashville*, 155; Douglas Anderson, "The Centennial Idea and the Centennial 'Dream,' " *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, Series 2, III (January, 1935), 107-10; William R. Garrett and Albert V. Goodpasture, *History of Tennessee* (Nashville, 1905), 280.
53. (Nashville, 1897). A Virginian wrote to Miss Annie W. Claybrooke, of Nashville, to tell of the interest manifested in Virginia and elsewhere in the plans for the exposition. B. B. Minor to Annie W. Claybrooke, March 22, 1897, in John S. Claybrooke Collection, State Library, Nashville.
54. G. P. Thruston, "The Development of History at the Tennessee Centennial," *American Historical Magazine*, III (January, 1898), 3-21; Garrett and Goodpasture, *Tennessee*, 280; McGee, *Tennessee*, 258-59.
55. *Ibid.*, 259; McRaven, *Nashville*, 164-65; *Official Guide*, 65 ff.
56. McRaven, *Nashville*, 171, 174-75; *Nashville American*, June 6, 1897.
57. McGee, *Tennessee*, 259-60.

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CHAPTER XXXIII

*The People of Tennessee at the Dawn of the  
Twentieth Century*

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TENNESSEE WAS EMERGING from the swaddling clothes of her second century as a state when the battleship *Maine* was destroyed in Havana harbor. If the *Maine* was sent to Cuban waters to impress Spain with the naval power of the United States and to serve as a warning to the Spanish government that the American people looked with disfavor on Spain's cruel and inhuman policy in that unhappy island, it accomplished little. The destruction of this ship further inflamed public opinion in the United States, and the people of Tennessee greeted the prospects of war with Spain enthusiastically.<sup>1</sup>

Four Tennessee regiments were mustered into federal service for the Spanish-American War.<sup>2</sup> The First Tennessee, originally commanded by Colonel William Crawford Smith, fought heroically at Manila. When Colonel Smith died of heat prostration in this battle, Lieutenant-Colonel Gracey Childers assumed command and led the regiment admirably for the remainder of the battle. The Second Tennessee Regiment was under the command of Colonel Kellar Anderson, the Third Tennessee was led by Colonel J. P. Fyffe, and the Fourth Tennessee was commanded by Colonel George Leroy Brown. The Second, Third, and Fourth Tennessee regiments were sent to Cuba, where they saw little if any fighting. Yet, from their roster of officers and men were to emerge several individuals who were destined to figure importantly in the future of Tennessee politics. Most prominent among these were: Cordell Hull, later to become secretary of state in the cabinet of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Ben W. Hooper, later to serve two terms as governor of the state, Lawrence D. Tyson, later to serve in the United States Senate, and Harvey Hannah, later to serve as a member of the Railroad and Public Utilities Commission.

Many Tennesseans served in other regiments during this war and contributed to the ultimate victory. Also, a considerable number of men from the Volunteer State rendered valuable service in the navy.<sup>3</sup> Commander Washburn Maynard, of the gunboat *Nashville*, is credited with firing the first gun of the Spanish-American War.

The First Tennessee was the last of the four regiments to return to the

state at the close of the war. The people of Tennessee rolled out the red carpet for this event in Nashville on November 29, 1899. A breakfast, a banquet, a parade, and a public meeting were crowded into this one day of unrestrained welcome. Governor Benton McMillin gave the address of welcome and appreciation in the crowded Nashville Tabernacle. With the dawn of November 30, 1899, the people were turning their attention to other activities and looking forward to the beginning of a new century.

*A New Century Dawns*—In spite of the fact that the *Commercial Appeal* was not willing to concede that January 1, 1900, marked the start of a new century most of the people of the state treated this day as the beginning of the twentieth century. This Memphis paper said, "The pope, the czar, the royal astronomer of England, and the *Commercial Appeal* are agreed that January 1, 1901 is the beginning of the twentieth century. And we know."<sup>4</sup> The Nashville *Banner* pursued a different course in its treatment of the birth of the new century. This paper reflected confidence in the future and pride in the past. It quoted Charles W. Harmon, manager of Bradstreets, to the effect that the Panic of 1893 was over, that the growth of the population and the development of new ideas would make business good in the future.<sup>5</sup> Many citizens felt that it was a time for prayer and thanksgiving, for a prayer service was held at McKendree Methodist Church, and services at St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral lasted for an hour and a half. News dispatches from over the state reflected a note of business optimism and religious praise for the coming of the new century.<sup>6</sup>

*Urban Centers Increase in Importance*—Tennessee originated as a frontier state with its early settlers engaged in fighting Indians, clearing a wilderness, and establishing homes. For the first four decades of statehood frontiers were being conquered, and then there gradually emerged a plantation system characterized by broad fields of grain, cotton, and tobacco. The Civil War damaged but did not destroy the plantation system in Tennessee. Reconstruction slowed down the agricultural and industrial development of the state, but the last quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed a slow but perceptible transition in the economy and people of the state. While the population was increasing at a fairly consistent rate, a slow shift of the people from the rural areas to the cities was in progress.<sup>7</sup> The census reports of 1900 indicate a population of 2,020,616, which represents an increase of 14.3 per cent over the 1890 figures. Urban communities claimed 16.2 per cent of the people while 83.8 per cent were classified as rural inhabitants.<sup>8</sup> Tennessee was still a predominantly agricultural state but was being slowly urbanized.

Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville were growing rapidly at the dawn of the new century. Memphis, emerging from the devastating effects of the yellow fever epidemics, had enjoyed a phenomenal growth in the last





(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Sterick Building*

decade of the nineteenth century and reached beyond the 100,000 population figure. With the official announcement of the census report, the *Memphis Evening Scimitar*, September 27, 1900, found cause to rejoice over this growth and recommended that a parade be held in the downtown section that evening.<sup>9</sup> Nashville was rapidly approaching this population classification, while Chattanooga and Knoxville were making substantial gains.

Nashville, in 1900, was the leading manufacturing city in the state, producing seventeen per cent of the manufactured products of Tennessee.<sup>10</sup> Memphis was the leading railroad center, having ten railway lines coming into its



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Johnson City*



stations. River traffic was heavy at Memphis, with great quantities of goods being shipped into and out of the city by boat. Chattanooga and Knoxville were also growing industrial centers.

A combination of employment opportunities, cultural advantages, and bright lights were luring the youth of the state away from the farms and into the cities. In the early part of the new century the four largest cities of the state began to feel the impact of the machine. The growth of industry was apparent in each of the cities, changing to some extent the physical appearance and life of each.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that in 1900 Tennessee had become an industrial state. The great majority of the people lived on farms and earned a living by farming. There were 224,623 farms in the state, and each averaged approximately ninety acres in size. This would indicate a trend away from the plantation system of earlier years when the average farm numbered 261 acres.<sup>11</sup> West Tennessee was the great cotton producing section with Shelby, Fayette, Haywood, Tipton, and Lauderdale counties growing more than one-half of the cotton raised in the state. However, most farmers had started crop diversification. Corn, hay, and wheat were raised in nearly every section, and corn was the most important crop grown in the state. Cattle raising was also on the increase with the census of 1900 indicating a total of 912,183 head of livestock on the farms. Maury County was the center of a great mule raising area. Fruits and vegetables raised in Tennessee in 1900 had a value of more than \$6,000,000. Gibson, Crockett, and Weakley were among the leading counties in the production of fruits and vegetables. Tobacco has long been an important crop in Tennessee. The cash value of this crop grown in the state in 1900 reached \$2,748,495. It must be remembered that the state did not become an important grower of barley until 1916.

It is significant that in the year 1900 the total value of farm property in Tennessee reached \$34,202,025, while farm products for the same year totaled \$106,166,440.<sup>12</sup> From this data, it appears evident that agriculture was increasing rather than declining. Although industry was growing it was not greatly changing the nature of the state.

Deposits of coal, good fields of iron ore, and rich deposits of copper ore combined with navigable streams and an abundance of potential hydroelectric power to make Tennessee a growing and promising industrial state at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was not until the opening of the new century, with its emphasis on industrialization, that the coal fields of the state were utilized to the maximum of their possibilities. Tennessee coal was found to be of good coking quality and in the year 1899 some 3,330,659 short tons of coal were taken from the 5,100 square miles of coal fields in the state.<sup>13</sup> The development in this same period of three iron ore fields gave rise to the manufacturing of iron and steel, which soon became the third most lucrative industry in the state.<sup>14</sup>



Johnson, Sullivan, and Washington counties formed the upper eastern district with Johnson City as the focal point of the industry. The second district was located in Roane, Rhea, Marion, Franklin, and Hamilton counties with Chattanooga as the leading center. Stewart, Montgomery, Dickson, Lewis, Lawrence, and Wayne counties composed the third district with Nashville being the center of trade for this area. The proximity of coal made simple the development of the eastern districts while the central area relied largely upon charcoal for firing their furnaces.

It must not be supposed, however, that agricultural products played no part in the industrial development of Tennessee. Flour and grist mills were located in every section of the state. Although many of these mills were small, their total output was enormous. Their products for the year 1900 reached a cash value of \$21,798,929, making milling the most valuable industry in the state and furnishing an important source of income to the farmers and to the mill operators.<sup>15</sup> Nashville, Knoxville, and Memphis, in the order named, were the most important centers of the industry. Many smaller cities and towns were finding milling an invaluable source of income.

Timber may properly be termed a product of the soil. The timber industry in the state was developing rapidly as the new century dawned, with Memphis being the largest lumber market in Tennessee and one of the largest hardwood markets of the world. Nashville was a leading producer of hardwood flooring. Saw mills and planing mills were located in many counties of the state.

Although in 1900 Tennessee was far from reaching a balance between agriculture and industry, progress in this direction was being made at a rather rapid rate of speed. The census of 1900 reveals that industrial products had a value of \$92,749,129 as compared to agricultural products with a value of \$106,166,440. It must be remembered that the price of farm commodities had not reached the high level which they were to attain in later years, and that much farm produce was consumed in the home.

The dawn of the new century found 45,963 Tennesseans earning wages totaling \$14,727,506 in 3,116 manufacturing establishments. These industrial plants were distributed throughout the state and were beginning to make use of Tennessee's great possibilities for hydroelectric power. We shall see in a later chapter how Tennessee became one of the great hydroelectric power states of the nation.

Flour, grist mill products, the timber and lumber industry, the manufacture of iron and steel, foundries and machine shops, textile mills, tobacco processing plants, and cotton seed products were in the order of their listing the most important manufactures in Tennessee in 1900. Again, it must be remembered that many of these industries were yet in their infancy with the greatest developments awaiting future years.

Corn, cotton, wheat, cattle raising, dairy products, poultry and eggs, fruits



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Business District*

and vegetables, and tobacco were the most important farm products in 1900. Scientific farming was in its infancy and the production of future years was to surpass that of the turn of the century.

*Education*—Through farming and industry the people of Tennessee were making economic progress at the opening of the new century. The growth of industry with its resulting tendency toward urbanization was accompanied by the problems which become manifest as a population starts shifting from the farm to the city. Crime was on the increase in the cities.<sup>16</sup> Tennessee was badly in need

of expanded educational facilities for its growing population. There was no adequate system of higher education, adult education was practically unknown, a shortage of public school facilities existed in the urban centers, and the rural schools were suffering from poor buildings, short terms, poorly trained teachers, and inadequate financial support. The general assembly had included a uniform textbook provision in a permissive County High School Law.<sup>17</sup> These two features had little direct effect on the problem at hand, as the first did nothing more than provide for uniform textbooks in the schools of the state and the second authorized but did not compel a county to maintain a high school.

Educational facilities were poor in Tennessee in 1900. The average length of a school term was five months per year, teachers were poorly trained and were certified on the local level rather than by the state, the average monthly salary of teachers was little more than \$28.00, and buildings were poorly planned and poorly constructed.<sup>18</sup> The University of Tennessee was receiving no direct financial support from the state. However, many thinking citizens were aware of the problem and in the early years of the new century progress was made in the public school system.

State penal and corrective institutions had been improved vastly in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the growth of cities, an increase in the crime rate, and the rise of more humanitarian viewpoints concerning the treatment of unfortunates rendered improvements in state institutions necessary. More important, the people of Tennessee were willing to accept the challenge confronting them in this new day and devote their attention and resources to a material improvement in educational and institutional facilities in the near future. Progress was destined to be slow, with many interruptions, but it was inevitable.

Privately supported and church related institutions of higher education were doing a high quality of academic work in Tennessee during this period. Notable among such institutions were: Vanderbilt University, the University of the South, Maryville College, Carson-Newman College, Southwestern Presbyterian University, Union University, the University of Nashville, Tusculum College, Cumberland University, and Bethel College. Fisk University for Negroes was making notable progress.

*Religion*—Pioneer Tennesseans took their religious beliefs seriously and the character of the people did not appear to have changed greatly in this respect as they faced the problems of the new century. While it is true that much of the impetus of the early revival movement had simmered away, the people appeared to be sternly Calvinistic and fundamentalist in their religious concepts. The evangelistic churches still had the greatest rate of increase in church membership while the liturgical churches were making but slow progress. While it is true that the rate of increase in church membership had slowed down by





(Courtesy of the College)

*Sewanee—Breslin Tower, University of the South: Modelled after  
Magdalen Tower, Oxford University, England*

1900, there appeared to be no reason for supposing that organized religion was on the decline in the state. It appeared that the clergy and their associates had merely paused to take inventory, plan for the future, and launch new drives. Subsequent trends indicate that such must have been the case.

The air was filled with talk of church union among the various branches of the Presbyterian church. Tennessee was the place of origin of the Cumberland Presbyterian church. In 1900 this body had an estimated 50,000 members in the state, but in the first decade of the new century a considerable percentage

of the members returned to the old Presbyterian denomination as a result of a partial national unification of the two bodies.<sup>19</sup> This unification did not mark the end of the Cumberlands and this church still has thousands of members in Tennessee.

Meanwhile the Disciples of Christ (widely known as the Christian Church) was torn asunder over the questions of instrumental music and missionary societies, which resulted in a division of this body into the Disciples and the Church of Christ. The Church of Christ appears to have been the victor in this separation, as the 1906 religious census gives it 41,411 members while the Disciples could boast of only 14,904 members. Both denominations remained fundamentalist in their beliefs, with the Church of Christ the more conservative body. Modernism as represented by such groups as the Unitarians found Tennessee almost barren soil.

The various denominations were evidencing a greater spirit of cooperation with each other. Late in the nineteenth century a number of the evangelical churches united their efforts to form a State Sunday School Association which employed field workers and a general state secretary. Although this resulted in a better degree of understanding and cooperation among the various churches it was not a forerunner of Protestant unification. The state, in 1900, had some fifty different religious denominations with varying degrees of government, ritual, and doctrine.

The federal Bureau of Census has not regularly included a church census among its undertakings. Denominational records on the state level are usually unreliable because of the tendency to count all baptized persons as church affiliates regardless of later confirmation or religious performance. A few groups keep no records on the basis that it is not scriptural to do so. Such a combination of circumstances makes an accurate religious survey difficult or almost impossible.

Available records indicate that in the year 1900 approximately 600,000 Tennesseans had some church affiliation. These communicants were members of approximately 7,000 congregations with a comparable number of church edifices. These buildings had a total value of some \$14,000,000. Leading denominations were: Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Disciples of Christ, and Episcopal. Religiously speaking, this new century gave promise of greater things to come in the years ahead. Within the new century religion was to become a big business in Tennessee with churches becoming highly organized and adopting many of the policies of the business world.

*Negroes*—It is believed that the first Negro slaves were brought into the state in 1766.<sup>20</sup> For more than a century thereafter, the Negro population in the state increased rapidly. By 1900 the rate of increase had declined, and the Negroes represented twenty-four per cent of the total population. Much of





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Nashville—Showing Capitol Hill*



this Negro population was concentrated in the southwestern section of the state, and engaged in farming, although a number of the Negroes were finding their way to the cities to work in industrial plants and as domestic servants.

Tennessee heralded the dawn of the twentieth century with a song of triumph over Spain, an optimistic belief in her growing industrial system, a glow of pride in her continued agricultural production, and an understandable confidence in her future development. It is true that the state had a growing crime problem, sadly inadequate educational facilities, difficulties with her tax structure, a crying need for internal improvements, and that urban development posed a new and mystifying problem. But it was not the first time that these descendants of the Wataugans had faced complex problems. With the confidence and courage transmitted to them by their pioneer ancestors the people of Tennessee set about seeking a solution to their multiple problems.

#### CHAPTER XXXIII—NOTES

1. George Townes Gaines, *Fighting Tennesseans* (Kingsport: 1931), 80.
2. John Trotwood Moore and Austin P. Foster, *Tennessee; The Volunteer State* (4 vols., Nashville, 1923), I, 589.
3. *Ibid.*, 591.
4. *The Commercial Appeal*, January 1, 1900.
5. *Nashville Banner*, January 1, 1900.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Seventeenth Census*, 1950, Population, I, 42-7.
8. *Ibid.*, 7.
9. *The Evening Scimitar*, September 27, 1900.
10. Philip M. Hamer, *Tennessee, A History* (4 Vols., New York, 1933), II, 770.
11. *Ibid.*, 767.
12. *Ibid.*, 838.
13. *Ibid.*, 876.
14. *Ibid.*, 877.
15. *Ibid.*, 876.
16. *The Commercial Appeal*, July 28, 1957.
17. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1899, Chap. CCLXXIX, 671
18. Andrew David Holt, *The Struggle For A State System of Public Schools in Tennessee* (New York, 1938), 80-81.
19. Thomas H. Campbell, *Studies in Cumberland Presbyterian History* (Nashville, 1944), 283. Historians are not agreed as to the number returning to the main body of Presbyterianism. Hamer gives the figure as two-thirds.
20. Caleb P. Patterson, *The Negro in Tennessee, 1790-1865*, II, quoted by John Ballenger Knox, *The People of Tennessee* (Knoxville, 1949), 18.

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## CHAPTER XXXIV

### *Politics from 1896 to 1920*

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**B**ITTER STRIFE HAD characterized the Democratic party in Tennessee in much of the decade immediately preceding the election of 1896. The rise of the Farmers' Alliance to the virtual control of the party, the bitterness engendered within party ranks by the "Coal Miners' War," the fight of the Bourbons to regain control of the party, and the growing antagonism of the rural voters toward the city voters all necessitated unity if the Democratic party was to win the election of 1896.

Multiple troubles beset the Republican party of the state at this time. The youngest party had not recovered from the stigma of the Civil War and reconstruction. Party leaders within the state were devoting too much attention to national issues. They were defending the protective tariff and imperialism at a time when the people of Tennessee were low tariff and anti-imperialistic in their opinions. The Grand Old Party was also fervently condemning socialism.<sup>1</sup> These combined factors did little to endear the party of Lincoln to the voters of Tennessee, and made its chances of success in the forthcoming election dependent upon a split in the ranks of the Democrats.

*Democrats Unite for Victory*—Republican chances of success appeared to be bright in the gubernatorial election of 1896. Many Democrats had strayed from the party fold to flirt temporarily with Populism. Others were bitter over the influence of the Farmers' Alliance and some were concerned because of the influence that labor was exerting in party affairs. The Democrats needed a candidate strong enough to unite the several factions within the party and sufficiently attractive to the people to persuade them that a Democratic victory was necessary to a solution of the growing problems of the times. They found such a candidate in former Governor Robert Love Taylor. Genial Bob Taylor had served two terms as chief executive and although his ability as an administrator was hardly comparable to his cleverness and eloquence on the stump, he possessed the ability to weld the party into a unit.

George N. Tillman of Nashville received the Republican nomination and waged a vigorous but unsuccessful campaign against the witty and entertaining Taylor. The vote was 156,228 for Taylor; 149,374 for Tillman; 11,971 for A. L. Mims, the Populist candidate; and 2,894 for Josephus Hapwood, the Prohibi-



(Courtesy Morristown Chamber of Commerce)

*Morristown—Downtown Business District of the city that was first-place  
Award Winner of the 1955 National Cleanest City Contest*

tion party candidate.<sup>2</sup> The vote for Hapwood was prophetic of future issues in the politics of the state.

Tillman filed notice in the general assembly of his intention to contest the election returns, but withdrew his petition when the Democrats retaliated by passing a law requiring a contestant to post a penal bond in the amount of \$25,000.

Perhaps the most significant accomplishment of Governor Taylor's term was the enactment of legislation creating the State Railroad Commission.<sup>3</sup> This commission was given the authority to regulate rates charged by the railway companies operating within the state. Governor Taylor and the general assembly were in a regulatory mood, for building and loan associations were brought under state supervision, insurance companies were compelled to submit to state scrutiny, and the sale of cigarettes was made unlawful.



Robert Love Taylor had brought unity to his party and was content to retire at the end of one term. The Democrats then turned to Benton McMillin, for years a member of the national House of Representatives, as their standard bearer in the gubernatorial election of 1898. McMillin defeated James A. Fowler, the Republican nominee, by a vote of 105,640 to 72,611. The Populist vote declined in this election while the Prohibitionists maintained their strength of two years before.

*State Debt Funded*—The funding of the state debt was the greatest achievement of Governor McMillin in his first term. Tennessee had a bonded indebtedness of \$16,455,200 and no sinking fund established for its orderly payment.<sup>4</sup> The Governor recommended to the general assembly the creation of a sinking fund, and the legislators responded by enacting the requested legislation. This law resulted in a reduction of \$1,000,000 in the state debt before the expiration of the McMillin term of office. Governor McMillin had little difficulty in winning reelection, for he defeated Republican John E. McCall of West Tennessee by more than 25,000 votes.

*The Democrats Find Peace*—Politics appeared to have settled into a state of serene quiet during the second term of Governor McMillin. The general assembly was occupied with such matters as school improvement, repairs on the state capitol, and the creation of the Ladies' Hermitage Association. The consensus of opinion seemed to be that the Democratic party was in the ascendancy and would stay there because the reasons for factional differences within the party had been relegated to the background or had been solved to the satisfaction of all. The Tennessee Central Railroad had been completed and the first train over its lines had arrived in Nashville to the unrestrained delight of many Tennesseans. The Cumberland Plateau had been crossed by lines of steel, and Colonel Jere Baxter, railroad executive and one-time aspirant for the governorship, was hailed by many citizens of the state.

It was under such auspices that James B. Frazier, Chattanooga attorney and son of a beloved Tennessee jurist, was given the Democratic nomination for governor. His Republican opponent was Judge Henry T. Campbell of Carter County. Frazier won without difficulty, but significantly, the Prohibitionist candidate maintained the previous strength of that determined party.

Governor Frazier sounded the keynote in his first message to the general assembly when he declared ". . . that peace and orderly government prevail within our borders, and that a reasonable degree of health and prosperity has blessed our people, and that the state's fiscal affairs are in a healthful and sound condition." The Governor quickly turned his attention to educational affairs, for he sponsored a bill to appropriate the surplus in the state treasury to the schools. Seymour A. Mynders, one of the most esteemed educators in the state,

was appointed to the office of state superintendent of public instruction. The popular educator was to launch the fight which resulted ultimately in the establishment of a modern system of public schools in Tennessee.

The general assembly appropriated \$40,000 for the purpose of sending a state exhibit to the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904. The citizens of the state cooperated in this endeavor and the exhibit won a number of awards. It would seem that the people had forgotten their differences, that the Democrats had established permanent political supremacy, and that the dove of peace had decided to take up abode on the soil of Tennessee.

*Prohibition Breaks the Peace*—This peaceful order of society was disrupted by the passage in the general assembly on January 26, 1903, of a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors in towns of not more than 5,000 population thereafter incorporated. Any town of proper size, under the terms of this act, could have its charter abolished and under a new charter would automatically be dry. Prohibition had injected itself into the politics of the state and was to become a point of bitter controversy for a number of years in the future. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Anti-Saloon League, and the newly organized Committee of One Hundred led the fight for the passage of this law. The constant campaigning of the Prohibition party was beginning to pay dividends. Like other minority groups in American political history, it was to abandon its political organization and fight for the adoption of its principles by the existing major political parties.

The Democratic party, as the majority political organization in the state, was destined to be torn asunder by the liquor issue within the first decade of the new century. Specific issues were prohibition, women's rights, and the growing labor movement. These questions, however, were merely symptoms of the population shift from rural areas to urban centers in the state. The four major cities, Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville, were increasing rapidly in population. Many rural people who had moved recently to cities were without knowledge of urban problems. There arose, quite naturally, a conflict of interest between the new urban dwellers and their recent friends of the rural counties. State tax collections increased in the cities and decreased in the rural areas. State expenditures did not change in the same ratio. Thus was established the foundations of a political controversy that has raged until the present day. It was, is, and apparently will continue to be, the rural counties versus the urban centers. Because of the failure of the general assembly to follow the constitutional mandate to reapportion the state every ten years, the rural bloc has held the upper hand throughout much of this battle.

The gubernatorial election of 1904 gave little indication of the epic battles ahead. Governor Frazier was nominated for a second term by the harmonious Democrats. Frazier and his Republican opponent, Jesse M. Littleton, a Chat-

tanooga jurist, stumped the state in joint debate, but the Democrats were united in their support of the nominee, who won over Littleton by a vote of 131,503 to 103,409. The Prohibition party failed to enter a candidate in this campaign.

*Partisan Fury*—All was peace and quiet in the politics of the state when on March 9, 1905, United States Senator William B. Bate passed away. With his death, the dove of peace flew out the window. The general assembly elected Governor Frazier to serve the unexpired term of Senator Bate, resulting in the automatic elevation of Senate Speaker John I. Cox to the office of governor. The election of Frazier and the promotion of Cox did nothing to maintain harmony within the Democratic party. Many people seemed to believe that a bargain had been made for high office and Cox bore the brunt of much criticism through his brief tenure. The new governor made an honest attempt to continue in effect the policies of his predecessor, for he devoted much of his attention to educational matters. He was also able to make substantial payments on the state debt, and to bring about the adoption of a new state flag. Nevertheless, Cox was denied a term in his own right by his party.

The Democratic convention of 1906 inaugurated a decade of fury in Tennessee politics, a decade which was to witness the splitting of the majority party, the ascendancy of the minority party, and the injection of personalities into political campaigns. Not since the days of Parson Brownlow were Tennesseans to heap so much vituperation upon each other.

Malcolm R. Patterson, member of Congress from the Memphis district and son of the distinguished Colonel Josiah Patterson, became the chief opponent of Governor Cox in the Democratic convention. Supporters of the Memphis candidate arrived in Nashville in advance of the convention, established headquarters, and proceeded to publish the *Tennessee Lancet*, a newspaper devoted to advancing the candidacy of Patterson and attacking the incumbent governor. A lengthy and tumultuous convention finally nominated the Memphis aspirant.

The Democrats closed ranks for the November election and Patterson defeated H. Clay Evans of Chattanooga, the Republican candidate, by a majority of some 19,000 votes.

Governor Patterson's first term was a progressive one, for it brought about the enactment of much legislation of lasting value to the people of the state. The new laws covered a multiplicity of subjects; among them were the creation of a state board of elections, the establishment of a county board of education in each of the counties, an act providing for the per capita distribution of school funds, an act establishing a county election commission in each county, a law creating a state highway commission, an act prohibiting gambling on horse races, the passage of a pure food law, an act providing for the erection of a state reformatory for boys, and a law declaring night riding illegal. It seemed for the moment as though the wounds of the 1906 fight had been



healed and that the people of Tennessee were to enjoy a period of political peace.

There had been trouble among the tobacco growers along the Tennessee-Kentucky line. The growers, feeling that they were being treated unfairly by the buyers, and in an effort to present a solid front against what they termed the trust, had organized themselves and made night raids on the farms of the growers not participating in the struggle against the buyers. These forays sometimes resulted in violence, and as the raiders wore masks and carried arms they posed a decided threat to law and order. The general assembly passed two laws relating to these disturbances, one making it unlawful to participate in night riding,<sup>5</sup> the other protecting tobacco crops from the night riders.<sup>6</sup> The two laws appeared to have remedied the trouble in the tobacco growing region and peace might have been maintained except for events occurring in the Reelfoot Lake area.

For generations the inhabitants of the country surrounding Reelfoot Lake had earned a substantial part of their living through the catching and selling of fish. These people had enjoyed the right of fishing in the waters of the lake regardless of the ownership of the land beneath the waters or the lands adjacent to the waters. Then several land companies were organized, which purchased the land and called on the fishermen to cease fishing in the lake or to pay for the privilege.<sup>7</sup> This was an unheard of demand in this section of the state and the fishermen organized to combat a situation which to them seemed unfair. Quentin Rankin and R. Z. Taylor, prominent attorneys of Trenton, were suspected by the fishermen of being in the employ of the land companies. The two attorneys were seized by a band of masked men on a night in October, 1908, and Rankin was murdered by the riders. Taylor made his escape during the excitement caused among the assailants by the execution of Rankin. Public opinion in West Tennessee reached a fever pitch at this evidence of lawlessness, and Governor Patterson sent the state guard to the lake region to restore order and bring about the apprehension of the individuals involved in the murder. Many of the raiders were captured and brought to trial. Eight men were convicted and sentenced to prison. However, the Tennessee supreme court eventually reversed the decision of the lower court and the alleged night riders were never brought to trial again. Probably the entire incident was indicative of the spirit of the times in the state.

Forces advocating prohibition had been active for many years in the nation and in the state. A proposed prohibition amendment to the state constitution had been defeated in 1887, but in that same year the sale of liquors near school buildings had been prohibited by legislative act. Twelve years later a law had been passed permitting any city of not more than 2,000 inhabitants to adopt prohibition by surrendering its existing charter and obtaining a new charter. This law was revised in 1903 so as to extend to cities of not more than 5,000



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Knoxville—McGhee Tyson Airport*

population, and four years later all cities in the state were accorded the privilege. Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, and LaFollette were the only places in the state to elect to permit the sale of intoxicants. Knoxville was the only one of the four major cities to take advantage of the permissive legislation. Legally, therefore, a major portion of the state was dry, but in reality a considerable traffic in liquor continued to flourish in most sections of the state.

The time was ripe for a campaign by the prohibitionists, and all they appeared to need was a leader. Former Senator Edward Ward Carmack, brilliant newspaper editor and at the moment politically unemployed, emerged as the champion of the militant drys. Carmack was capable of providing able leadership, being endowed with an active mind, a splendid personality, a viriolic pen, and a caustic tongue. It was a foregone conclusion that Governor Patterson would exert great influence in the Democratic convention. If the drys were to succeed, it was necessary that Carmack defeat Patterson for the

nomination. The state Democratic committee adopted the unusual procedure of ordering a primary election for the nomination of a candidate for governor. It was apparently believed that this departure would serve to prevent a possible split in the party over the liquor question. If such was the hope, it was in vain for the primary served only to postpone the rupture.

Governor Patterson announced the appointment of the able Austin Peay of Clarksville as his campaign manager and Carmack countered with the selection of George H. Armistead of Franklin as his manager. Rarely has Tennessee seen two candidates of comparable ability on the platform. Prohibition was the big issue with Patterson favoring local option and Carmack advocating state-wide prohibition. Other issues were relegated to a secondary role as the two giants of the political arena faced each other in joint debate. A four-hour debate in the crowd-packed Chattanooga auditorium on April 16, 1908 opened the greatest series of political discussions held in Tennessee since Bob and Alf Taylor had fascinated the people with the "War of the Roses."

The candidates toured the state, speaking from the same platform before the same audiences, and the people turned out to cheer on their favorite. Carmack was a brilliant orator with a ready wit; he was a master of invective with an amazing vocabulary, but he had a tendency to explode under pressure. Patterson was an orator of no mean ability, possessed of a deliberate manner, a logical mind, and stability under fire. Yet, it is by no means certain that the joint discussions decided the outcome of the primary, for most people appear to have attended these debates with a preconceived determination of how to vote. Carmack ran strong in the rural counties but Patterson was the beneficiary of much of the city vote. The real issue may have been the growing conflict between the urban centers and the rural areas. Patterson won the nomination by a majority of 7,137 votes. However, the primary was to leave wounds on the political face of Tennessee that would impair its reputation for years in the future.

If there was a division in the Democratic party it was not deep enough to prevent Patterson from defeating George N. Tillman, his Republican opponent, by nearly 20,000 votes in the November election.

Edward Ward Carmack had been defeated for the nomination of his party for the governorship, but his desire for prohibition had not been dimmed nor had his brilliant command of the language been dulled. This crusader had previously edited the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* and now he was called to the editorship of the influential Nashville *Tennessean*. He brought to this position his ardor for prohibition, his uncanny ability to express his thoughts with brilliant bitterness, and the courage to write his convictions. Soon after gleefully discovering that the drys had enough votes in each house of the general assembly to outlaw liquor, he turned his talents to the rumor that Governor Patterson and former Governor John I. Cox had settled their political differences.



Carmack professed to see sinister implications in this reconciliation, and gave credit for effecting it to Colonel Duncan Cooper, a personal and political friend of the chief executive. Two editorials written by Carmack were published in the *Tennessean* on November 8, 1908.<sup>8</sup> One, entitled "Across the Muddy Chasm," was critical of Patterson; the other, entitled "The Diplomat of the Zweibund," was caustic in its tone concerning Colonel Cooper. Reports were rife in Nashville that Cooper would seek satisfaction from the fiery editor, and friends interceded with Cooper to dissuade him from precipitate action.<sup>9</sup> Colonel Cooper and his son, Robin, met Carmack on Seventh Avenue (then known as Vine Street) on the late afternoon of November 9, 1908. Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Eastman of New York were walking along the street and came between the antagonists. Mrs. Eastman stated that she heard the elder Cooper accuse Carmack of hiding behind a lady.<sup>10</sup> The duelists opened fire as Mrs. Eastman darted through a nearby gate. It appears that the editor fired the first shot.<sup>11</sup> However, Carmack partisans have never acknowledged such to be the case. Carmack was shot three times, near the heart, through the neck, and through the left arm. The younger Cooper's pistol appears to have been fired three times, while there seems to be no evidence that his father had discharged his weapon. The pistol used by the slain man contained two empty shells, and Robin Cooper had been hit in the shoulder by one bullet. The fact that all of the participants were armed is indicative of the tension that had existed in Nashville on that tragic day.

Public opinion in Tennessee flared into a bright flame with press and people expressing themselves without restraint. Governor Patterson issued a statement deploring the death of his erstwhile opponent and stating that he had advised Cooper to ignore the Carmack editorials.<sup>12</sup> The *Tennessean* editorially flared, "... demanding the prompt and speedy execution of justice on the men who have been guilty of this unprovoked and bloody assassination."<sup>13</sup> The *Chattanooga Times* editorially declared the killing to be without justification.<sup>14</sup> The *Memphis Commercial Appeal* advised: "... let the issue be tried, and if the living cannot legally justify their act, let them pay for it the penalty the law exacts, no matter what it may be."<sup>15</sup>

The Coopers were indicted for the murder of Carmack and tried in the criminal court of Davidson County. They were found guilty and given prison sentences. The verdict was appealed to the Tennessee supreme court and the conviction of the elder Cooper was affirmed, while the case of his son was remanded to the lower court for a new trial. Governor Patterson immediately granted Colonel Cooper a pardon. The charges against Robin Cooper were *nolle prossed*.<sup>16</sup> The cry was raised throughout the state that the pardoning of Duncan Cooper was proof that the Governor had connived in bringing about the death of Carmack. Not since John Sevier and Andrew Jackson had engaged in their famous political brawls had the citizens of Tennessee been so sharply

divided over politics. The primary of 1908 had generated bitter feelings, but the death of Carmack and the pardoning of Cooper entered deeply into the lives of the people of the state. The Democratic party split down the middle, but more serious, the individual citizens separated into factions over the question. Wounds were inflicted that were to be slow in healing and were to leave scars of long duration.

Governor Patterson, favoring legalized liquor, realized that the general assembly of 1909 would soon consider the question of prohibition. In the early days of the session he sent to that body a message embracing his views, but he was ignored. The first law the legislators passed prohibited the sale of intoxicating beverages within four miles of a school building. The law, to become effective July 1, 1909, had the effect of state-wide prohibition as all incorporated municipalities had school buildings.<sup>17</sup> The Governor promptly vetoed the bill and the general assembly as promptly passed it over his veto. Possibly the victory belonged to the rural legislators and their constituents. After years of controversy and recrimination the legal sale of liquor had been banned in the state.

The most significant act of the second Patterson term was the passage of the General Education Bill of 1909. This was the most important educational legislation yet enacted in Tennessee, being the cornerstone of the state's present educational system.

*Independents and Fusion*—During Governor Patterson's second term there developed within the Democratic party a faction to become known as the Independents. This group appears to have originated among party members who were dissatisfied with the party's 1908 platform on prohibition, to have gained strength through the death of Edward Ward Carmack, and to have ripened because of the open violation of the prohibition law and the liberal use of the pardoning power by the governor. Mass meetings had been held in nearly every section of the state protesting the open violation of the liquor law and public sentiment was running high upon this issue. It was with this unrest existing in the state that the Democratic Executive Committee, under the chairmanship of Austin Peay, met in Nashville March 30-31, 1910 for the purpose of determining the method of selecting party nominees. Although Justices W. D. Beard, M. M. Neil, and John K. Shields protested the idea of a primary, the committee decreed that there should be one and that all candidates for the nomination must enter it.<sup>18</sup> This decree meant that members of the judiciary must run in the primary to secure the party nomination. The jurists immediately announced that they would not enter the primary and were joined in this declaration by several members of lower courts. They apparently believed that the chief executive, controlling the party machinery, might retaliate against them if they failed to reverse the conviction of Duncan



(Courtesy of the Fraternity)

*Memphis—Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity National Office*

Cooper or brought in decisions unfavorable to the administration in power. A mass meeting was held in Nashville, the old cry of a free and independent judiciary was sounded, five jurists were declared to be the nominees for their respective offices, and a vigorous campaign was opened in their behalf. Similar meetings were held throughout the state, and the Independent movement was launched. The Republicans cooperated by making no nominations of candidates for these posts, and the Independent jurists were victorious by a 40,000 vote majority.

The Democratic party was now split, the success of the Independents having endowed them with the courage to oppose the nomination of Patterson by the old line Democrats for a third term. Newell Sanders, Chattanooga industrialist and high-minded Republican leader, wanted the nomination of his party in 1910. Sanders had long been a leader of his party in Tennessee and had always put party welfare above personal ambition. He again took this position when it became evident that the influential Chattanooga *Times* would



not support him for the office of chief executive. He withdrew his name from consideration to permit the nomination of Ben W. Hooper of Newport.<sup>19</sup> Hooper had supported the prohibition law as a member of the general assembly, and had served as an officer in the Spanish-American War. Not only was he popular with the members of his own party, but he was acceptable to large numbers of the opposition party. Consequently, the Independents held a convention and endorsed the Republican nominee. Fusion had been born in Tennessee politics. It soon became apparent that Patterson could not bring together into a unit the divergent elements of his party. Therefore, the harassed Patterson resigned as the nominee of his party and the sorely-pressed Democratic State Committee resigned so that a new committee and a new nominee could be selected. A second Democratic convention was held at which a new state committee was elected, and the "old magician," Robert Love Taylor, was nominated in a desperate effort to save the governor's office for the Democrats. A revised platform was silent on the controversial liquor question. "Our Bob" stumped the state with vigor and eloquence, captivated his audiences with his wit and humor, and displayed his customary grace and charm. He was not elected, however, for the split in his party was too deep and the wounds from the Carmack-Cooper-Patterson affair were still unhealed. Hooper, the beneficiary of the Independent vote, received 133,074 votes while the native of Happy Valley could muster only 121,694 votes. The Newport resident became the fourth Republican governor in the history of the state and the first of his party to be elected to that office since 1880. Fusion had emerged from its swaddling clothes to find itself in charge of the destinies of the state.

Strife was rampant in Tennessee as the general assembly convened on January 2, 1911. The people were divided into bitter factions over the liquor question, with some clamoring for a more stringent enforcement of the law and others advocating a repeal of the law or welcoming an illicit trade in alcoholic beverages. The *Tennessean* hurled charges of bribery and debauchery, warned the would-be debauchers to beware and protested that the wishes of the people were being ignored at the cost of decency and virtue.<sup>20</sup> Legislators arrived in Nashville to find eight contested elections in the house of representatives and one in the senate. Members found themselves divided into three groups: Regular Democrats, Independent Democrats, and Republicans. There was little doubt that the Independents and Republicans would fuse and make common cause against the Regulars and the united groups would level an attack on alcoholic beverages. Consequently, thirty-seven Regulars failed to make an appearance for the swearing-in ceremonies, and issued a statement to the effect that their actions were motivated by the fact that the Fusionists would control the house of representatives if the contests were decided in their favor, and would control any joint session of the two legislative houses. The fear of a joint session was induced by the forthcoming election of a United States Senator.

However, on January 10 all contests were withdrawn, a majority of the absent legislators assumed their seats. It appears that this situation resulted from an understanding between the forces of Governor Hooper and the followers of E. H. Crump, Memphis political leader. The Shelby leader wanted the back-tax collection system revised and promised to join his forces with Hooper if the Governor would agree to such revision of this system. The chief executive agreed to this plan and harmony of brief duration ensued.<sup>21</sup>

The first business before the newly organized general assembly was the election of a United States Senator. The leading candidates were incumbent James B. Frazier, former Governor Benton McMillin, Colonel B. A. Enloe, Guston T. Fitzhugh, Newell Sanders, L. D. Tyson, and Kenneth McKellar. The voting lasted for twenty-three days, and it appeared for a while that Colonel Enloe would be elected for at one time he was within three votes of election. When it became apparent that no candidate could muster a majority, Enloe withdrew and the name of Luke Lea was presented as a compromise candidate. Lea was an energetic, capable, and attractive individual, who was destined to become a stormy petrel on the Tennessee political scene for years ahead. He gained the support of the Fusionists and was elected to the Senate.

With the Senate race out of the way, the general assembly proceeded to inaugurate the new governor and clear the decks for fights over the election laws and the ever turbulent prohibition question. Crump asked Hooper for an agreement that no more liquor law enforcement legislation would be sought and when the Governor declined to enter such an agreement the dove of peace left the legislative halls.<sup>22</sup> So bitter did the battle become that on April 13, thirty-four Fusion members of the house of representatives broke a quorum by departing for Decatur, Alabama. There this recalcitrant group remained until assurances were given them that the prohibition and election laws would not be changed in any respect. Loosely speaking, this legislature was in session for 145 days, but the absence of a quorum much of the time probably kept it within the constitutional limitation of seventy-five days. Under such circumstances, it is remarkable that any constructive legislation was enacted at this session. However, an act to secure for working married women the right to collect their own wages was passed, the age of consent law was raised from eighteen to twenty-one years, and a law was passed forbidding the employment of children under fourteen years of age. This assembly was concerned with the rights of women and children.

While this tumultuous session of the legislature was in progress, the beloved Senator Robert Love Taylor died, and Governor Hooper appointed Newell Sanders of Chattanooga to serve the unexpired term. Thus, as Sanders was a Republican, promise was given for a future political battle.

From the national viewpoint the political year of 1912 belonged to the Democrats. Theodore Roosevelt and President Taft had split the Republican

party, and the Democrats had nominated a progressive native Southerner in the person of the scholarly Woodrow Wilson. Regular Democrats in Tennessee had high hopes that the tide of national victory would spill over and sweep the Republicans from the state capitol. Such hopes, however, were in vain as the old alignment of Independent Democrats and Republicans prevailed, with Governor Hooper polling 124,641 votes to 116,610 votes for former Governor Benton McMillin.

When the general assembly convened it appeared that harmony would prevail, for the powerful Shelby delegation had signified that it would cooperate with the Fusionists. While the Shelby contingent favored a change in the liquor laws, an understanding had been reached by which they would not press for modification of these laws so long as the Governor and his supporters did not insist upon the passage of more drastic enforcement laws. The truce was short lived, for the more ardent drys started urging the passage of laws further restricting the liquor traffic. The Shelby delegation then aligned itself with the Regulars and the repeal of the prohibition laws appeared to be imminent. The Fusionists were desperate because they could envision the return of legal liquor and the passage of pending amendments to the election laws; so in order to prevent these happenings some twenty members of the lower house found a haven in Middlesboro, Kentucky. They were not concerned that a few days previously an act had been passed making it illegal for members to absent themselves from the session in order to obstruct the passage of legislation.<sup>23</sup> Thus the 1913 assembly had adopted the techniques of the immediately preceding session. The remaining members of the assembly ignored the constitutional provision for a quorum and proceeded to enact legislation. A harassed governor appealed on two occasions to the absent legislators to return to their duties, but except for a brief interval most of the absent lawmakers remained absent. This assembly remained in session until August 23, a total of 202 days. Again, the constitution had been flaunted, but the general assembly of 1913 was not conscious of constitutional limitations.

The affairs of the state were in a sorry condition. No appropriation bill had been passed and there were numerous other matters needing legislative attention. Without the passage of revenue and appropriation bills, the business of the state would eventually come to a halt. Governor Hooper was conscious of this situation, and called the assembly into special session effective September 8, 1913, but this rebellious and temperamental body failed to enact any laws to assist in solving the problems confronting the state. The determined chief executive then called a second special session of the assembly. Perhaps, the members had become weary, or possibly the people at home were expressing their disgust with their representatives, for this second extraordinary session passed in five days the laws that should have been enacted in the regular session. The general assembly of 1913 had passed into history and with it



passed a turbulent era in Tennessee politics. New conflicts would arise to confound the people, but none more violent than those which had tormented the people in the era that was passing from the scene.

*An Uneasy Peace*—Possibly the Democratic party in Tennessee was tired of factional strife by 1914; or, perhaps, it was influenced by the rapidly developing trend toward national prohibition when early in that year the convention declared for the maintenance and enforcement of the prohibition laws. With this avowal of policy, Tom C. Rye of Paris announced that he would be a candidate for the governorship subject to the action of the state convention at its May 27-28 meeting in Chattanooga. Rye was the choice of the rural folk, for in a hotly contested convention battle for the nomination with T. R. Preston of Chattanooga, he failed to receive a vote from the four urban centers of the state. Nevertheless, on the ninth ballot Rye received his party's nomination for the governorship. Rye was in perfect harmony with the dry platform which the convention had adopted.

The Republicans and the Independents, less effectively fused than previously, again nominated Governor Hooper. Fusion had run its course in Tennessee politics, and the Democrats elected their candidate by a majority of more than 20,000 votes. Tennessee had returned to the fold of the Democratic party.

The Democratic platform had called for law enforcement, and the new governor believed in the platform and in the enforcement of the law. Early in the legislative session Rye sent a special message to the assembly calling for the enactment of legislation which would permit the removal from office of any state, county, or municipal officer found guilty of neglect of duties or failure to enforce the law. Such a law was introduced and passed after prolonged and bitter opposition.<sup>24</sup> This law was to become known as the Ouster Law.

It was a well known fact that intoxicating beverages were being sold in a number of cities of the state and that law enforcement officers were not greatly concerned over the situation. Charges of neglect of duty were brought against J. A. Riechman, sheriff of Shelby County, but were dismissed in chancery court. Governor Rye called the general assembly into special session to consider charges of neglect of duty and failure to enforce the law against Judge Jesse Edgington and Attorney-General Z. Newton Estes, both of Shelby County. The house of representatives voted impeachment and the two officials were tried by the senate and removed from office when the charges were sustained. Edward H. Crump, mayor of Memphis, was removed from office in court proceedings when he was found guilty of failing to enforce the prohibition laws in his home city. The Ouster Law and its implementation brought about better law enforcement in a number of counties and municipalities.

Governor Rye was responsible for the passage of much good legislation, especial attention being paid to education, health, and conservation. During his first term, he brought about the reorganization of the State Board of Education, he provided examinations for persons entering the medical profession, and he caused to be created a state department of game and fish. Legislation was passed discontinuing capital punishment except in cases of rape.

Renomination came to Governor Rye without opposition, and he had little trouble in defeating John W. Overall, Republican, by nearly 30,000 votes.

Rye's second term was characterized by the defeat in a referendum of his proposal to convene a constitutional convention. The constitution had not been amended since its adoption in 1870. A bill authorizing the working of convicts on roads was passed, the Commission for the Blind was created, legal holidays were determined, and pensions for Confederate veterans were increased without opposition.

A new pattern for Tennessee politics was designed by the passage of a Compulsory Primary Law, forcing all aspirants for an elective office to secure the nomination of their party through participation in a primary election.

*The First Regular Primaries*—The political year of 1918 was to introduce a new pattern of political behavior in the state. Aspirants for party nomination for an elective office would have to take the fight to the people in a primary election. As mentioned, such a primary had been held by the Democrats in 1908 for the purpose of selecting a candidate for governor. Kenneth McKellar had won the nomination for the Senate in a 1916 primary. However, these primaries were but rehearsals for the series of political shows in store for the people of the state. The Democratic primary of 1918 found three aspirants seeking the gubernatorial nomination. They were Albert H. Roberts, Austin Peay, and Clyde Shropshire. Roberts won the nomination by a majority vote. John K. Shields defeated Governor Rye for the senatorial nomination. Roberts had little trouble in defeating H. B. Lindsay, the Republican nominee in the November election, while Shields easily won the senatorial contest.

Retiring-Governor Rye and Governor-elect Roberts joined in recommending to the general assembly the ratification of the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. This was consummated on January 13, 1919, and the liquor question after more than a decade as the central theme of Tennessee politics passed from the scene.

Tennessee's tax structure was badly in need of revision and the new governor gave it his immediate attention. Tax assessments for all purposes were determined on the county or municipal level and the railroads and utilities had benefited by this method. Roberts secured the enactment of legislation vesting the State Railroad Commission with power to determine tax assessments on these companies.<sup>25</sup> His second revision of the tax structure provided a state



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*McMinnville—Airport*

tax on property,<sup>26</sup> and the third authorized the State Railroad Commission to make assessments of railroad and utility properties for the counties and municipalities.<sup>27</sup>

Reform was an item in the program of the Governor and soon the assembly had repealed the Bowers Law prohibiting capital punishment, levied a five cent state property tax for the benefit of elementary schools, passed a workmen's compensation act, and accorded married women the same right to own property that was accorded to single women.

The administration of Albert H. Roberts closes a chapter in the political history of Tennessee. Within the pages of this chapter is recorded peace and prosperity, reform and opposition to reform, harmony and bitterness, praise and vituperation, and temperance and intemperance. All are a part of the record of the Volunteer State: a record sometimes proud and sometimes shameful, but notwithstanding the record of a proud and sensitive people who take their politics seriously.



## CHAPTER XXXIV—NOTES

1. Verton M. Queener, "The East Tennessee Republican Party, 1900-1914," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 22 (1950), 97.
2. Election returns cited in this chapter are taken from the official manuscript books in the office of the Secretary of State, State Capitol Building, Nashville.
3. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1897, Chap. X, 113.
4. *Ibid.*, 1899, Chap. VIII, 12.
5. *Ibid.*, 1907, Chap. 427, p. 1069.
6. *Ibid.*, Chap. 529, p. 1780.
7. Taylor, Hillsman, "The Night Riders of West Tennessee," *W.T.H.S. Papers*, VI (1952), 77. Paul Vanderwood, "The Reelfoot Lake Night Riders," (M.A. thesis, Memphis State University, 1957).
8. *Nashville Tennessean*, November 8, 1908.
9. *The Commercial Appeal*, November 10, 1908.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Nashville American*, November 10, 1908.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Nashville Tennessean*, November 10, 1908.
14. *Chattanooga Times*, November 10, 1908.
15. *The Commercial Appeal*, November 10, 1908.
16. This is a Latin term employed in legal circles and means that the charges are dropped.
17. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1909, Chapter 1, 3. A good discussion of the background of this legislation is Leslie F. Roblyer, "The Road to State-wide Prohibition in Tennessee, 1899-1909 (M.A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1949).
18. *Nashville Tennessean*, April 1, 1910.
19. Rufus Terral, *Newell Sanders, A Biography* (Kingsport: 1935), 149-64.
20. *Nashville Tennessean*, January 3, 1911.
21. Terral, *Newell Sanders*, 195-96.
22. *Ibid.*, 196, Russell L. Stockard, "The Election and First Administration of Ben W. Hooper as Governor of Tennessee," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 26 (1954), 54-55.
23. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1913, Chap. XXXVIII, 165.
24. *Ibid.*, 1915, Chap. II, 2, 5.
25. *Ibid.*, 1919, Chap. I, 1.
26. *Ibid.*, Chap. II, 11.
27. *Ibid.*, Chap. III, 13.

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## CHAPTER XXXV

### *Industry Grows in Twentieth Century Tennessee*

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TENNESSEE, FORMERLY CHIEFLY AGRICULTURAL, now is industrial, with its manufacturing payrolls twice its farm income.<sup>1</sup> This change in the income of the state has come about within the last decade. From its inception until ten years after the close of World War II the state had been agricultural in its nature with the majority of its people engaged in agricultural pursuits and its principal income derived from farming. Tennessee's manufacturing facilities in 1958 represented a total investment of more than \$3,500,000,000. Manufacturing in that same year contributed nearly thirty per cent of the personal income of Tennesseans, while agriculture's share was only about nine per cent.<sup>2</sup>

The number of manufacturing plants increased from 2,225 in 1939 to more than 4,000 in 1954 and the number of employees in the same period increased from 152,179 to 261,000. By 1958 there were more than 280,000 Tennesseans employed in manufacturing establishments. Thus, the state has taken its place among the industrial states of the nation and its position among Southern states in industrial development is virtually unchallenged. Modern Tennessee has come of age industrially, and in the year 1960 great progress is continuing.

*Industry at the Turn of the Century*—Industrial development in Tennessee at the dawn of the new century was in its infancy. The capitalization of industry in 1899 had reached a new high, \$71,182,966, the value of manufactured products reached \$92,749,129, a new and pleasing high to the people of the state. The workers employed in 1899 reached 45,963 and these hands were paid a total of \$14,727,506 in wages.<sup>3</sup> These statistics were a cause for rejoicing in the Volunteer State for many people felt that industry was approaching a balance with agriculture.

Ten industries produced the major portion of the products and income for the state in 1900. They also employed the greatest portion of the people engaged in industrial work. These ten industries included 47.3 per cent of the total number of plants, used 61.6 per cent of the capital, employed 56.8 per cent of the workers, and paid these workers 56.8 per cent of the total wages earned in the state.<sup>4</sup> The leading industry in the state was the milling of flour and grist mill products, with a total value of \$21,798,929 or 20.3 per cent of



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Johnson City—Miller Brothers Lumber Company Plant*

the total products of Tennessee industries. Nashville was the leading center of flour milling, with Knoxville leading the eastern section and Memphis the western division of the state. Virtually every small town, because of an abundance of corn and an ample supply of water power, had a flour or grist mill.

The second most important industry was the lumber and timber industry. Memphis had become the largest inland hardwood lumber market in the world. The forests of the state were virtually unlimited in their productive capacity and there yet remained thousands of acres of virgin timber. Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga were also leading producers of lumber and hundreds of small towns possessed lumber mills.

Third place among the state's industries was held by iron and steel. The state had a total of sixteen large iron and steel manufacturing plants, employing a total of 2,000 workers and producing materials valued at \$5,000,000.<sup>5</sup> This industry was made possible by an abundance of coking coal and iron ore. This



industry was located in several areas of the state, with an important district located in upper East Tennessee, a second area centered around Chattanooga, and a third area of production located in the western section of Middle Tennessee.

Other industries in the state ranked in the following order: foundries and machine shops, textile plants, railroad repair and car building shops, manufacture of tobacco products, plants making cotton-seed products, leather making industries, and planing mills. Tobacco processing plants were increasing most rapidly among these industries as the new century began.

*Trends in Twentieth Century Industry*—The first three decades of the new century saw the state attract new capital to invest in industry. It also witnessed the development of a new interest among the people in the general industrial development of the state. The number of industrial establishments decreased, but the productive capacity of those remaining increased materially. The trend was toward fewer but larger plants. This tendency necessitated the accumulation of larger sums of money for the building and operating of industrial plants. This problem was solved by the formation of corporations with the ability to assemble large amounts of money under one direction. The expansion of markets made large scale operations feasible, and competition made economy of operation necessary. The nature of industry in Tennessee was undergoing a period of transition. Nearness to markets, transportation of raw materials and finished products, the amount of labor available for work in an industry, the proximity of other industrial plants, the presence of public power, and all of the other ingredients necessary for industrial development caused industry to be located in the growing urban centers of the state. This does not imply that the small towns in the state had no industry, but rather that large concentrations of industry were being established in the cities. Tennessee was gradually assuming the characteristics of other industrial areas.

*Electric Power Influences Industrial Development*—Tennessee industry, since its inception, has employed three distinct types of power. In the pioneer period of industry direct water power was used; about the time of the Civil War the steam engine became the source of great power; since 1920 electricity has provided the power to operate the state's industries. This new source of industrial power did much to change the types of industries developed in the state. No longer did the big ten of Tennessee industry in 1900 dominate the manufacturing processes of the state. The making of knit goods had developed by 1929 to the extent that its value reached a figure twice as high as all of the industries of the state had attained in 1900. In 1929 four rayon plants produced \$25,000,000 worth of goods.

There can be little doubt that the advent of electric power and the exigen-



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Copperhill—Tennessee Copper Company Plant*

cies created by World War I did much to revolutionize industry in Tennessee as well as in many other parts of the country. New industries were established in the state during the critical war years, and although many of them were temporary in nature they fostered development of a permanent industrial system. For two years following the end of the war, Tennessee industry lost ground and recovery was slow. However, out of this bitter experience the people learned to diversify industry as they had learned to diversify agriculture. The result was rebuilding on a more solid foundation. Hundreds of different products are manufactured in Tennessee, and it would be an almost impossible task to list and classify all of them.

Between 1900 and 1930 a decided change had taken place in the list of ten leading industries of the state. An examination of statistics for the latter date reveals that the following industries produced goods with the following values: knit goods, \$48,406,388; lumber and timber products, \$32,604,611; flour and mill





(Courtesy Kingsport Chamber of Commerce)

*Kingsport—Tennessee Eastman Company, Division of Eastman Kodak Company*

products, \$28,600,288; cotton seed and vegetable oils, \$26,568,489; cotton goods, \$26,173,993; railroad car repair shops, \$25,484,092; rayon and allied products, \$25,188,075; prepared animal and poultry feeds, \$24,681,882; planing mill products, \$19,486,762; motor vehicle and parts, \$19,088,798.<sup>6</sup>

The state also boasted numerous other industries which were producing large quantities of materials and furnishing many workers with annual incomes. Among these industries were: chemicals, printing and publishing, meat packing, the making of boots and shoes, and tobacco processing.

This increase in industrial development resulted in the somewhat rapid growth of the four largest cities in the state. Memphis became the largest city and in its urban area manufactured products in 1929 were valued at \$191,694,654. Nashville and Davidson County produced materials to the amount of \$139,888,279 in that same year. Chattanooga and Hamilton County ranked third with products approximating \$114,309,637. Knoxville and Knox County manufactured goods valued at \$68,995,325. The entire state produced manufactured



goods to the extent of \$730,509,612.<sup>7</sup> Memphis, the largest inland cotton market in the world, became the largest producer of cotton-seed products in the world. Nashville, in 1930, had more than 250 industrial plants. No longer were the four largest cities of the state to be classified as agricultural cities for they had become industrial centers.

*Growth in the Fourth Decade of the Century*—Industrial development in Tennessee, like it did in the balance of the nation, suffered serious losses as the result of the economic depression. This depression, starting in late 1929 and lasting to the latter years of the next decade, caused the closing of many industrial plants in the state. It resulted in large losses in the income of people dependent upon industry for wages. Tennessee industry did not start emerging from the depression until early in 1937. In that year there were 2,083 industrial plants operating in the state and paying total wages of \$109,247,514. These plants produced goods to the value of \$707,986,784. Two years later the state had made only slow progress with 2,289 plants paying wages to the amount of \$109,661,769 and producing goods to the value of \$728,087,825. The state was well on the road to industrial recovery when World War II gave it an impetus hitherto unknown in the history of Tennessee. It is significant to note that in 1939 rayon and allied products had become the most valuable industry in the state, producing goods valued at \$59,724,728. Meat packing, valued at \$28,266,104 ranked second, and chemical production ranked third.<sup>8</sup> It was evident that the nature of Tennessee industry had changed.

World War II brought many additional industries to the state and these industries, unlike those of the earlier war, have remained in operation for the most part. Among these industries are the important Oak Ridge atomic energy center, and the Arnold Air Engineering Center at Tallahoma.

*Industrial Development Since 1945*—Approximately 1,750 new industries have been established in Tennessee since 1945. Total investment in these new industries is estimated to exceed \$434,000,000, exclusive of all expenditures by the federal government.<sup>9</sup> Tennessee, standing in the midst of the greatest industrial expansion in the history of mankind, was leading the eleven Southern states in the expansion of industry by 1957.<sup>10</sup> The abundance of hydroelectric power available to industry in Tennessee has been responsible for much of this development. In addition to the new industries established in the state, some 1,885 industrial plants have expanded since 1945. Since 1950 a total of 2,117 industrial projects, both new plants and expansions, have been listed as completed, in progress, or definitely planned. These plants will afford eventual employment for some 79,400 workers with an estimated payroll of \$235,000,000 annually. This expansion makes Tennessee a leading industrial state and represents a total investment in industry in the state of \$3,500,000,000.



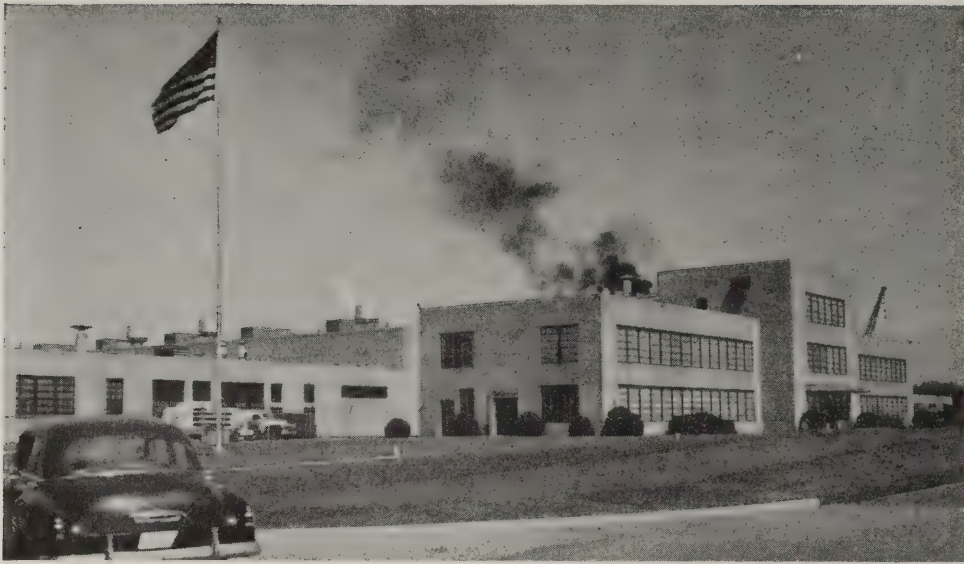
(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Chattanooga—Wheland Corp. & U. S. Pipe & Foundry Company Plants*

Since 1947 manufacturing employment in the state has risen about thirty per cent, and approximately 280,000 workers are employed with a payroll approximating \$851,000,000 in 1954 or an increase of seventy-nine per cent over the 1947 figures.

The great increase of manufacturing employment in Tennessee during recent years is shown by the fact that the state had fifty-six factory workers per thousand population in 1940 as compared to eighty-six per thousand in 1955. The entire South, in 1955, had seventy-two workers per thousand population.

*Some Notable New Plants*—Bowaters Paper Company has completed a \$100,000,000 newsprint mill at Calhoun to become the largest building in the state since World War II. Du Pont has constructed a \$40,000,000 nylon plant at Chattanooga and expanded its installations in Memphis. Although the Ford Motor Company closed its small and obsolete assembly plant in Memphis, it opened a new \$40,000,000 plant in Nashville. American Enka has recently



(Courtesy Industrial Committee of 100)

*Chattanooga—E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company Plant*

completed a \$40,000,000 rayon tire yarn plant at Morristown to add to the recent industrial development of the eastern section. International Harvester has invested more than \$30,000,000 in its Memphis plant. This plant is turning out annually a large number of mechanical cotton pickers. Kimberly-Clark and Grace Chemical Company have also invested heavy sums in plants in Memphis. International Shoe Company has a new \$1,000,000 tannery in Bolivar. Murfreesboro has recently received a \$5,000,000 General Electric small motors plant. Practically every county in the state has located within its limits at least one industrial plant and many of them have several plants. Industrial development seems yet in its infancy in Tennessee.

East Tennessee, aided by excellent mineral and water resources, has led the state in industrial development, accounting for the major share of the state's manufacturing. On the basis of employment, East Tennessee predominates in textile, chemical, and primary fabricated industries; Middle Tennessee leads in printing and publishing, leather, and apparel industries, with good representation in food, lumber, and chemicals; and West Tennessee dominates the field in lumber, wood, and food products, with textile, apparel, and leather well represented.<sup>11</sup>

*Tennessee Industries Well Distributed Over the State*—Geographically, manufacturing industries are well distributed in all parts of the state. Only eight counties in the state do not now have at least one plant employing as many





(Photo by Willard Smith)

*Calhoun—Bowaters Southern Paper Corporation Plant*

as one hundred persons.<sup>12</sup> There are approximately fifty manufacturing plants now employing more than 1,000 persons each, and a number of plants working as many as 5,000 employees. This offers a striking contrast to the three plants in the 1,000 plus category of 1919. There are about sixty plants employing between five hundred and 1,000 persons, but the majority of the state's plants employ less than one hundred workers.<sup>13</sup>

Nearly every city and town shares in the economic benefits of the state's manufacturing operations. Money spent in payrolls and the purchase of supplies generates additional business for wholesale suppliers, service industries, retail stores, banks, transportation companies, professional people, and other forms of enterprise. Even towns without factories have workers who commute to nearby plants but spend their earnings in their home communities. Industry in Tennessee has become a symbol of economic progress and a measure of urban growth and development.

*Tennessee Plans for Industrial Development*—Much of the responsibility for the state's rapid industrial growth may be attributed to the work of the Tennessee Industrial and Agricultural Development Commission. This commission was created July 1, 1953, and has worked consistently to bring new industry into the state and has done much to encourage the expansion of industry already operating in Tennessee. Soon after its formation the commission an-



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Jefferson City—Zinc Mine*

nounced a special pilot plan to attract industry to the state. This plan was centered around the idea of explaining to possible investors the advantages of the state for industrial location. The commission worked closely with town and city officials in locating possible industrial sites and explaining to management the natural resources of the various sections of the state. In the first four years of operation the commission was instrumental in locating 629 new plants in the state, and the expansion of 934 existing plants. These new and expanded facilities provided employment for 65,000 persons.

The commission has sponsored trips to other sections of the country by state and local officials in an effort to attract new industries to Tennessee. Those making the trips are organized into teams and they go into such cities as Detroit, Chicago, and New York contacting officials of existing industries and trying to persuade them to establish branch plants in Tennessee or to move their entire operations to the state. These teams have been very successful for





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Chattanooga—View Showing Plant of Combustion Engineering,  
Chattanooga Division*

the past three years, securing many new industries for Tennessee. However, they have sometimes run into the active opposition of officials of other cities. Early in 1960 the mayor of Detroit publicly castigated Governor Buford Ellington for coming to Detroit in an attempt to lure away industry.<sup>14</sup> This incident, however, has not resulted in halting the activities of the industrially minded officials of Tennessee.

A law has been enacted in the last few years by the general assembly which has been of material assistance in the efforts to make Tennessee an industrial state. This act permits cities and counties to issue general obligation bonds for construction of buildings to lease to industry.<sup>15</sup>

The commission consists of the governor and eight members appointed by the chief executive. The members serve without compensation, and they represent city and county governments, power distributors, agriculture, industry, organized labor, banking, and transportation.



An abundance of low cost electric power has been one of the chief inducements in attracting new industry to Tennessee. Tennessee Valley Authority electric rates are from thirty to forty-five per cent lower than the national average. This abundance of low cost power has been of inestimable aid in the industrial development of the state.

A second advantage offered to industry by the state is the abundant water supply. The Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers guarantee that industry will never run short of water even though underground sources should be depleted.

Tennessee has an ample supply of native born labor. The state has been reasonably free of labor disturbances and the prevailing wage has not been as high as it has been in the industrial centers of other sections of the country. This abundance of labor has been one of the chief attractions to new industry.

Other advantages are cited by the industry-seeking officials of the state. Among them are the great mineral resources of the state, the availability of coal and other fuels, the fact that the state has a good transportation network, proximity to markets, the absence of a state property tax, and the low corporation and franchise taxes in force.

Within the twentieth century Tennessee has made the transition from an agricultural state to an industrial state. This change has had as great an effect on the lives of the people as the great transition of the nineteenth century when the state passed from frontier to agriculture. The people have adapted themselves to the changing era and the orderly progress of social, economic, and cultural life has not been adversely affected.

#### CHAPTER XXXV—NOTES

1. *The World Almanac*, 1960 (New York, 1960), 207.
2. *Industrial Tennessee* (Tennessee Industrial and Agricultural Development Commission, 1958). Mimeographed brochure.
3. Philip M. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 876.
4. *Ibid.*, 877.
5. *Ibid.*, 877.
6. *Ibid.*, 881.
7. *Ibid.*, 881.
8. *The Encyclopedia Americana* (New York, 1959), XXVI, 421.
9. See Note 2.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *The Tennessee Conservationist* (Nashville), August, 1958.
15. *Ibid.*

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## CHAPTER XXXVI

### *Public Education in Twentieth Century Tennessee*

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IF TENNESSEE TODAY has a creditable system of public education, it has been, in a large measure, the product of the men, events, and time that have moved across the horizons of the twentieth century in the state. It should be said at the outset that the state has made rapid strides in educational matters, but that progress has not always kept stride with the ever growing necessity for greater efforts in building a satisfactory system of public schools. A fast-rising birth rate, a scarcity of trained teachers, a woeful lack of school buildings have all combined to make public education a major problem in the state today. Yet, it is not a new problem to Tennessee, because this state, like many of its neighboring states, has a lack of wealth and an antiquated tax structure.

The disrupting forces of civil war, the freeing of the slaves, the bitterness of reconstruction, the economic distress of the farmers, and the complacency and inertia of the people all served to keep educational progress at a minimum in Tennessee during the last half of the nineteenth century. Probably, the only bright promise of hope was an admonition contained in the constitutions of 1835 and 1870 to the effect that it should be the duty of the general assembly to cherish literature and science. That body appeared, much of the time, to be unaware of the admonition.

In the first year of the new century the state emerged from the Panic of 1893 with the price of farm products rising sharply and with land values rising accordingly. The state debt, a problem to the assembly since the days of reconstruction, was placed on a sound basis and plans for its liquidation were formulated by the legislature.<sup>1</sup> By 1903 this debt had been materially reduced, the state income had increased considerably, and a surplus was in the treasury.<sup>2</sup>

Prior to the beginning of the new century education had not entered deeply into the politics of the state. It was not that education might not have been a good political issue, but the people had been more interested in the restoration of state control to the ex-Confederates, and then the small farmers of the state turned on the Bourbons and wrested political control from them. Control, in many respects, was simply more important than issues. Therefore, with improved economic conditions and the battle for political control reason-

ably well solved, the less privileged people of the state started thinking in terms of improved educational opportunity for their children. Benton McMillin, elected governor in 1898 on a platform calling for better schools, brought about the passage of a Uniform Text Book Law, which served the valuable purpose of stimulating the interest of the people in education.<sup>3</sup>

The appointment of Seymour A. Mynders as state superintendent of public instruction, by Governor James B. Frazier in 1903, marked the beginning of a new era in education in this state. Superintendent Mynders was the first professionally trained and experienced educator to be elevated to that office. He had been trained at the University of Tennessee and he had served as a teacher and administrator in the public schools of the state. He brought to the office a rich background of experience, a wide acquaintanceship with the school people, and a program for education which he was determined to see come to pass.

It would probably be well to examine the status of the schools when Superintendent Mynders took office. Five months was the length of school term prescribed by law, although it would appear that this law was not being enforced in most counties.<sup>4</sup> There were 6,758 primary schools, 1,069 secondary schools, and no high schools operating in the state.<sup>5</sup> The scholastic population, as defined by law, numbered 771,965, of which 484,663 were enrolled in schools, with 341,538 in regular attendance.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it may be seen that less than fifty per cent of the eligibles were in regular attendance. The average monthly salary of teachers was \$28.86 with a low in Van Buren County of \$18.50 and a possible high in Shelby County of \$40.72.<sup>7</sup> The training of the teachers appears to have been commensurate with the salaries. There were no state colleges for teacher training, although the state did appropriate in 1901 a total of \$55,600 for teacher training. This money went to George Peabody College for Teachers, into scholarships for teachers, and in the holding of teacher institutes. The University of Tennessee received no appropriation from the state. Schools appear to have been of short term, poorly attended, poorly financed, and poorly housed.

This was the situation confronting Superintendent Mynders and to the solution of which he proceeded to dedicate his energies and abilities. A group of school administrators met in Nashville early in 1903 at the behest of Mynders to draw up an educational platform and launch a campaign to bring about a realization of their objectives.<sup>8</sup> The eight-point platform that this group adopted is probably typical of all future education platforms in the numerous campaigns of this century. In brief, it called for: an increased state school fund, local taxation for education, school consolidation, better training for teachers, establishment of teachers' and school libraries, establishment of one or more high schools in each county, elimination of politics and nepotism from the schools, and intelligent and economical expenditure of school funds. When this campaign





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Oak Ridge—Business District and High School*

was launched Superintendent Mynders had able and talented assistance from P. P. Claxton, who had come to the University of Tennessee following a successful and brilliant tenure as chief of the Southern Education Board's Bureau of Investigation and Information. Claxton was perhaps the most gifted educational propagandist of his time. Tennessee was fortunate that he adopted the state as his home. Dr. Claxton was later to serve as United States commissioner of education during the Wilson administration. Mynders also received able assistance from J. W. Brister and R. L. Jones, future state superintendents.

While the campaign of 1903 did not achieve all of its goals, it accomplished much and laid the ground work for the campaigns of 1906 and 1908. Valuable assistance in the campaign of 1903 was given by the county superintendents, the State Teachers' Association, the Public School Officers' Association, and numerous individual teachers and laymen. In short, it was a cooperative effort on the part of many of the finest citizens of the state. The chief obstacle appears to have been the apathy of the citizens, and in an effort to arouse the people the campaign was carried into every county of the state. The campaign was repeated in 1906 under the able direction of Superintendent Mynders. Again, much progress was made even though complete goals were not realized, but important reactions were developing among the people.

Fortunately, Governor Patterson followed the practice that had been established by Governor Frazier in appointing a trained and experienced educator to the post of state superintendent. R. L. Jones, professional educator and master diplomat, was the Patterson choice for the post. Jones lost no time in determining his program and launching a campaign to bring about its implementation. Again the big four of Tennessee education, Claxton, Mynders, Brister, and Jones campaigned in every county of the state, preaching the doctrine of education and asking the people to bestir themselves in behalf of the schools. It was in the campaign of 1908 that Jones won his greatest recognition as a diplomat and as an educational politician. As the campaign progressed and as the school people of the state became aroused, Superintendent Jones turned his attention to the business, professional, and civic leaders of the state, inviting a considerable number of them to meet in Nashville for the purpose of advocating school improvement on the local level. Jones knew his men and under his skilled handling they decided to form "The Cooperative Education Association" and announced tentative plans for a state-wide educational campaign. The superintendent, ably abetted by P. P. Claxton, had given these leaders the reins. This association named an executive committee composed of the following: P. P. Claxton, chairman; Seymour A. Mynders, Dr. J. H. Kirkland, Bishop Thomas F. Gailor, R. M. Barton, John A. Patton, and R. L. Jones.<sup>9</sup> This committee was representative of the business, professional, and religious leaders of the state. Jones had done his work well. This committee conducted the affairs of the association, waging an active campaign for educa-

tion. School Improvement associations were formed in virtually every county of the state, totalling an astounding 1,500 associations with a membership approximating 60,000.<sup>10</sup> These organizations were, in a large measure, instrumental in bringing about the passage of the General Education Bill of 1909. The "Cooperative Education Association" under the guiding hand of Miss Virginia Moore, became the "School Improvement League" and assisted materially in the educational campaign of 1910 and 1912. Still later the name of the organization was changed to the Parent-Teacher Association, and as such has continued to be a powerful factor in developing public schools in Tennessee.

Since the inception of school legislation in Tennessee, separate bills dealing with each desired end had been the practice of those wanting the passage of school laws. Hence, each session of the general assembly had been faced with a number of school bills. Naturally some passed while others failed to secure the necessary votes or were buried in committee. When the legislative session of 1909 convened the school forces of the state had pledged a majority of the members to the support of their program—a program which was to be encompassed into the comprehensive and significant General Education Bill of 1909.

This bill, in its broad scope, called for the appropriation annually of twenty-five per cent of the gross revenue of the state to the general education fund. The distribution of this fund, as provided by the act, was no less important than the appropriation itself. The major terms of this act are of sufficient importance to be summarized as follows:

1. Sixty-one per cent to be apportioned to the several counties according to scholastic population.
2. Ten per cent to be appropriated for the purpose of more nearly equalizing the common schools in several counties, \$33,600 of this equalizing fund to be used to supplement the salaries of the county superintendents.
3. Eight per cent to assist counties in maintaining public high schools.
4. One per cent to assist in the establishment and maintenance of libraries in public schools.
5. Thirteen per cent for the establishment and maintenance of normal schools in each of the state's three grand divisions, and an Agricultural and Industrial Normal School for Negroes in Nashville.
6. Seven per cent to the University of Tennessee for maintenance and improvement.<sup>11</sup>

It can be seen from the above that the General Education Bill of 1909 contains the core of the present educational system in Tennessee. This act has served as a basis for most subsequent educational appropriations in the state. While it is true that amounts and percentages have varied, the broad principles



have remained constant, and the services and institutions established have been maintained and broadened.

It should be remembered that this act was passed while some of the bitterest political controversies in history were swirling about the general assembly. The wets and drys of the state were locked in a bitter and decisive battle with many drys feeling that the passage of such an appropriations bill would militate against prohibition because of the loss of revenues from liquor. The bankers of the state were opposed to the bill because it would take large sums of money out of the treasury in January and July of each year, and the banks then paid no interest on state funds deposited with them. The death of Edward Ward Carmack was still reverberating throughout the state and many people were opposed violently to Governor Patterson. There is reason for believing that the opposition of drys and Carmack devotees influenced Governor Patterson in signing the bill.<sup>12</sup>

Education was relegated to a secondary role in the General Assembly of 1911 because of the political controversy of the day and also because Governor Ben W. Hooper had not made education a major platform plank in his campaign for governor. However, Governor Hooper did follow in the fine tradition established by his predecessors when he appointed J. W. Brister to the state superintendency. Superintendent Brister was a professional educator with a great amount of wisdom and determination. He spent the first two years of his administration in studying school needs and formulating a program.

This program called for an increase in the general school fund from twenty-five to thirty-three and one-third per cent of the gross revenues, a compulsory school attendance law, uniform examination and certification of teachers, the consolidation of schools and the transportation of pupils, and the apportionment of school funds on the basis of attendance rather than scholastic population. The general assembly enacted all of these measures into law except the last. This marks the end of what Holt calls the campaign era in Tennessee education.<sup>13</sup>

This era was a period of rare and brilliant accomplishment. County high schools were established, the three normal schools were built and put into operation, a state normal school for Negroes was established, school consolidation was started, transportation of students was originated, school libraries were created, the training of teachers was improved, and the University of Tennessee was given financial support by the state and made an integral part of the state school system. Rarely has one decade witnessed greater educational progress.

The educational forces of the state apparently went into a state of inactivity in the years immediately following their signal successes of 1909 and 1913. This, combined with the fact that interests opposed to the advancement of education launched a counterattack, resulted in nothing more than the bare maintenance of the *status quo* for the next several years. Tom C. Rye, run-



(Courtesy Bristol Chamber of Commerce)

*Bristol—High School*

ning for the governorship in 1914, promised to take the schools out of politics. Possibly, the political leaders of the state felt that the educational forces were exerting too much influence on the people with the result that the people were bringing too much pressure upon the politicians. Be that as it may, there appears to be no justification for the charge that the schools were in politics. Claxton, Mynders, Jones, and Brister were educational leaders rather than politicians. The exalted position that each held during the courses of their respective careers was due to their training and ability rather than political preferment. Candidate Rye seemed to strike a responsive chord in the minds of the voters for he was elected governor. S. W. Sherrill, an honest but shy and timid man, was appointed to the state superintendency. Claxton was in Washington as United States commissioner of education, Mynders was dead, Brister had succeeded to the presidency of the West Tennessee State Normal School, and Jones was at Murfreesboro as president of the normal school. Meanwhile the influential Public School Officers' Association dwindled in numbers and in power, while the State Teachers' Association ceased temporarily to function.

Rye, with the tacit approval of Sherrill, permitted his leaders to tamper with the school system. The first procedure was to enlarge the State Board of Education from six to nine members and authorize that body to elect the state

superintendent. Such a plan appeared to be designed to implement the governor's promise to remove the schools from politics. It is possible, however, that the enlargement was for the purpose of guaranteeing the election of the Governor's choice. This bill did not have the support of the state school forces.

A second Rye proposal brought bitter opposition from the educational leaders of the state, being enacted as a storm of protest swept the state. This act established the Tennessee Polytechnic Institute at Cookeville. The protest was probably generated by the method proposed for financing this new state institution of higher learning. The state appropriation for high schools was to be reduced by twenty-five per cent to establish and maintain this institution. The East, Middle, and West Tennessee education associations took up the cudgels against the proposed bill and petitioned the assembly to refrain from such action. Dr. Brown Ayers, president of the University of Tennessee, and many other important educational leaders fought the measure in the assembly.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the Rye administration passed the law and Tennessee Polytechnic Institute is now a recognized and well established part of the state's system of higher education.

The so-called "school lobby" had received a valuable lesson through the actions of Governor Rye and the general assembly of 1915. Not least among the lessons learned was the necessity of keeping a lobby in Nashville for the duration of each session of the legislature. It was well for education that the school lobby was on the alert when the general assembly of 1917 started its deliberations.

It would be well to remember that the state was not in good financial condition in 1917. Bonds were being sold to pay for current operating costs, and the state debt was ever present. The nation was plunging along the road to war, and the minds of the people were not attuned to educational problems. It was within the framework of these conditions that the Rye administration introduced piecemeal its education program. The proposals called for a small increase in the appropriations for elementary schools at the expense of the University and normal schools. It was further stipulated that the school funds be given to each division of the system on a budget instead of a percentage basis. The friends of the University and normal schools rallied their forces for immediate protest against the substantial reductions proposed in the budgets of these institutions. Mass meetings were held in Knoxville, Johnson City, Murfreesboro, and Memphis.<sup>15</sup> So quickly and efficiently did the University and normal school people arouse public sentiment that the sponsors withdrew their proposals and introduced a compromise measure known as the Dunlap Bill. This bill was written by State Treasurer Porter Dunlap and sent to the Finance, Ways and Means Committee for consideration. Apparently, Dunlap had drawn the bill without the approval of the Governor or the State Board of Education. It was no more acceptable to the school forces than was its



predecessor, because it too sought to curtail the program of the university and the normal schools. Divide and conquer appears to have become the strategy of the foes of education, the plan seeming to be to pit the institutions of higher learning against the elementary and high schools. If such was the case, the educational forces, by now commonly known as the school lobby, failed to fall into the trap. County superintendents, high school principals, normal school presidents, and University officials made common cause against the Dunlap Bill. This hard-fighting and efficient group secured the appointment of a recess committee to study the needs of the schools and to recommend to the general assembly a program commensurate with the needs and the ability of the state to finance. The recess committee visited the state institutions of higher learning, conferred with numerous officials and interested citizens, and introduced a comprehensive education bill, one that took into consideration the needs of all divisions of the school system. The school lobby rallied its forces in support of this bill and it passed both houses of the legislature by good majorities. The technique of the politicians had failed and education in Tennessee was on the threshold of a period of greater progress.

Educators viewed the inauguration of Governor Albert H. Roberts in 1919 with trepidation. Roberts had campaigned on a platform calling for a revision of the taxing system of the state, and upon assuming office he made tax revision the primary concern of his administration. The school people feared this, although there had been no great manifestation of unfriendliness in the public utterances of the new governor. However, the normal school people became alarmed when an attempt was made to repeal the bill passed two years previously authorizing a bond issue for improvements at these institutions. Even though this repeal bill failed to pass, further alarm was created when a bill was passed returning the power to appoint the state superintendent to the governor.

Governor Roberts, however, relieved all alarm, when he appointed the able, aggressive and popular Albert Williams to the state superintendency. The youthful Williams moved with alacrity in formulating his program, winning the Governor's strong support, and in securing legislative enactment. The Williams' plan was simple: a five-cent general property tax in addition to all other school revenues then being provided. Distribution was no more complex: one-third to the counties equally, one-third to the counties on the basis of scholastic population, and one-third would be distributed as an equalizing fund to counties unable to maintain an elementary school term of seven months. This law made available to the schools \$2,500,000 more per year than had been available in the previous year. Williams had accomplished this without the assistance of the school lobby, as he had moved more rapidly than the lobby could be organized for concerted action. Williams, however, was not in opposition to the school forces, for he had soon mobilized them behind

a strengthening amendment to the compulsory school attendance law and a law creating a five-man text book commission. Education, under the dynamic leadership of Williams, took on new life in Tennessee. The State Teachers' Association, which for three years had been dormant, was reorganized into a militant body. The Public School Officers' Association gained renewed strength and became again a powerful force for the advancement of education. United States Commissioner of Education Claxton, at the request of Governor Roberts and Superintendent Williams, returned to the state to launch a campaign for education. Claxton presided over a Tennessee Citizens' Conference at Monteagle in August of 1920. This conference declared for a minimum school term of eight months, adequate support of high schools, support for the University and the normal schools, uniformity of school legislation, and funds sufficient to put Tennessee's schools among the national leaders. This program sounded the battle cry of education and served as a basis for programs yet to be formulated in the state. The campaign was in full swing with good promise of success when Governor Roberts was defeated for reelection in the November general election. This change in administrations swept Albert Williams out of office on the eve of his possible success. Certain it is that Williams prepared the way for the success of J. B. Brown, his successor in office.

Governor Alfred Taylor had pledged his wholehearted support of the schools in his campaign. He delivered on that promise by backing Superintendent Brown in presenting a sound educational measure in the early days of the general assembly of 1921. Property taxes for school purposes were increased by three cents on the \$100 assessed valuation; counties participating in the equalization fund were required to levy a thirty cent property tax on the assessed valuation and maintain a school session of 100 days; the long promised \$625,000 in bonds for the normal schools and the Tennessee Polytechnic Institute was made available; and the state supplement to county superintendents' salaries was raised to \$1,000 provided the superintendents devoted full time to their work. Thus a Republican governor and a Democratic general assembly cooperated to maintain the growth of education in the state.

The inauguration of Governor Austin Peay in 1923 marked the dawn of a new era in educational administration in Tennessee. Governor Peay sponsored a state reorganization bill which resulted in the state superintendent of education becoming the commissioner of education and also becoming a member of the governor's cabinet and directly responsible to the governor for the administration of school affairs. This change has resulted in improved school administration, but has also given the governor tremendous power in determining educational programs and appropriations. This, with a few exceptions, has been to the advantage of the schools of the state.

P. L. Harned was the Peay choice for commissioner of education. Harned came to this office with a rich background of educational experience, having



*Cleveland—Bradley County High School*

served for years as a member of the State Board of Education, having been a member of the State Textbook Commission, and having served a total of six years in the State Department of Education. Moreover, Commissioner Harned probably knew more about the game of politics than any man who ever served as chief school officer of the state. The new commissioner had been closely associated with the Patterson campaign in 1908 and he had managed Rye's campaign in 1914. He had also strongly supported Peay in 1918 against Roberts. Harned knew politics as well as education. School leaders and political leaders were soon to become aware of the Commissioner's broad qualifications.

A General Education Bill, thirty pages long and sufficiently broad to provide for the almost complete reorganization of the state school system, was introduced but soon killed in the house of representatives. The Nashville *Banner*, caustic opponent of Governor Peay's policies, found reason to rejoice.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Andrew D. Holt, in his meritorious study of the state school system, is of the opinion that this bill failed because Governor Peay was not strongly sold on it and because he was too busy getting the entire government of the state reorganized.<sup>17</sup> Events would indicate that the Holt thesis is correct, because the Governor appeared to have almost unlimited power with the general assembly.

Between the legislative sessions of 1923 and 1925, Commissioner Harned and the school lobby obviously convinced Peay that education was among the most important functions of the state, because Tennessee never had a governor



who more strongly advocated the cause of education than did Peay in the general assembly of 1925. Harned had organized the school people and many laymen behind a strong program for school reorganization and improvement. The auspices appeared to be favorable with a friendly governor and a friendly membership in the general assembly. Under these auspices, the General Education Bill of 1925 started its turbulent and sometimes stormy course through the legislature. This bill originated in the house of representatives where it was amended 156 times. Its course was no smoother in the Senate, where it was long delayed and amended 121 times. The foes of education were responsible for the majority of all amendments. Many items were lost through this process, but the administration managed to keep intact the core of the bill: an equalization fund that would guarantee an eight month elementary term to every county that would levy an elementary school tax of fifty cents and a dollar poll tax. The three normal schools were made four-year colleges and the name of each was changed to State Teachers College. In an unrelated school bill which did not have the sanction of the school lobby, the famous, or infamous, Anti-Evolution Act became a law. Much of the equalization fund was derived from the bitterly contested tax of ten per cent on manufactured tobacco. Regardless of amendment and anti-evolution departures, Peay and Harned had wrought well for education.

It was quite natural that a majority of the school people supported Peay in his race for a third term. Such support could have but one result politically speaking. Hill McAlister, Peay's opponent in the Democratic primary, charged Harned with organizing a powerful school lobby to aid in the creation of a Peay-Harned machine. The Nashville *Banner* took up the cry and from that time forward Commissioner Harned was a political issue. Peay, hotly denying that the schools were in politics, won a primary victory over his opponent and swept on to an overwhelming victory in the general election.

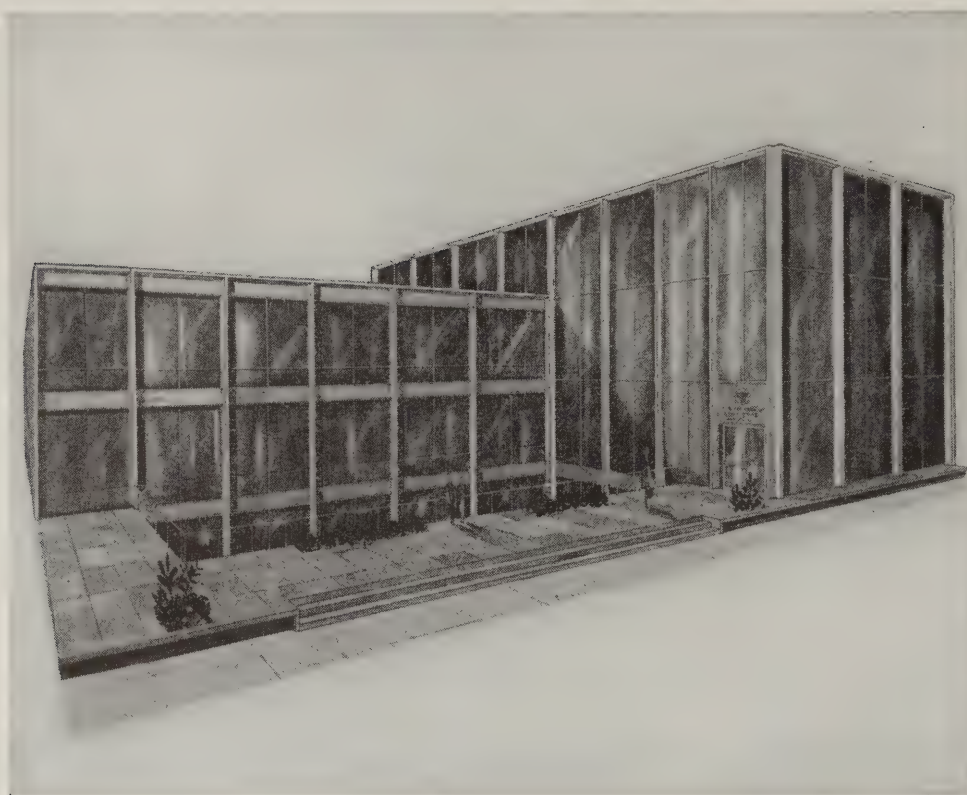
The victorious governor further championed the cause of education in the 1927 general assembly. The equalization fund was increased more than three-fold, financial assistance was granted to the counties in building rural schools, \$600,000 was appropriated for the teachers' colleges for buildings, and \$500,000 per year for the next five years was voted for a building fund for the University. Peay overcame all opposition in securing the enactment of his program. Austin Peay Normal at Clarksville was established and a junior college branch of the University was located at Martin. The school lobby did not ask for the creation of these two institutions.

With the death of Austin Peay on October 2, 1927, education lost its best friend. Henry Horton, speaker of the senate, became governor and there was no change in the office of commissioner of education. The new governor was apparently friendly toward education, even though he appeared to have no definite plan in mind, and was soon making common cause with Commissioner

Harned. The Commissioner aimed at a state plan of financing the public schools to replace the county-state plan that had been in effect for a number of years.

Harned knew that the defeat of Horton in the election of 1928 would be ruinous to his educational plans, as such a defeat would sweep a new commissioner into office. Therefore, he entered actively into the Democratic primary contest between Horton and Hill McAlister. McAlister, running with the support of the city political machines, made Harned the focal point of his fiercest fire. Horton was renominated by a small majority and went on to overwhelming reelection in November. Harned was still in office and, in a large measure, determining the educational policies of the Governor. The Harned plan for making the school appropriation a part of the state budget rather than a percentage of one-third of the gross revenue was enacted without serious opposition by the general assembly of 1929. Two years later, with Horton again safely elected governor, Harned was concerned with a complete revamping of the state's tax structure. The politically powerful Public School Officers' Association went on record as favoring a sales tax.<sup>18</sup> Even though the people of Tennessee were beginning to feel the pinch of the economic depression in 1930, a temporary alliance between the powerful Crump political organization and Horton resulted in the overwhelming reelection of Horton. However, chaos was to come almost immediately. The Holston Union Bank of Knoxville closed its doors on November 11 to be followed two days later by the collapse of Caldwell and Company in Nashville. State funds, as well as a liberal portion of county funds, were involved in these financial debacles. The 1931 general assembly met amid cries for economy in all matters of state government. The school forces were on the defensive, with the sorely pressed governor asking that there be no reduction in appropriations for education. It is significant that the school lobby, Horton, and Harned were able to keep the educational appropriation from substantial reduction. This is even more illustrative of the power of the school lobby when it is realized that the Governor and Harned were accused of fraud and that impeachment proceedings were brought against the unhappy Horton.

The educational leaders of the state met with Commissioner Harned and planned an old-fashioned campaign to arouse the people and pave the way for a better school program in 1933. The State Teachers' Association voted \$5,000 for such a purpose, and the old campaigner, P. P. Claxton, was asked to manage the drive for improved schools. Two sources of possible revenue had been proposed by Harned: a general sales tax, and a gross income tax disguised for constitutional reasons as a privilege tax. The campaign died before the bitterness of the Democratic primary of 1932. Hill McAlister, again running, but this time with the support of the powerful Crump machine; former Governor Malcolm R. Patterson, the Horton-Harned-Luke Lea candidate; and Lewis S. Pope, apparently momentarily independent, waged bitter warfare for the



(Courtesy of the Chamber)

*Nashville—Architect's sketch of New Chamber of Commerce Building*

Democratic nomination. McAlister was the winner over Pope by a narrow margin. Pope charged fraud and ran as an Independent in the general election. McAlister was elected and Harned sent his resignation to retiring Governor Horton. The Harned era, ten years of constructive school legislation, political vituperation, and personal animosity, had come to a close. The friends of Harned have praised him while his enemies have called down maledictions upon his head.

Regardless of the charge that Harned was essentially a politician rather than an educator, the decade in which he served as state commissioner witnessed the enactment of more progressive school legislation than any similar period in the history of the state. In this period of ten years laws were enacted which provided:

1. An eight-month elementary school term for counties which would levy a fifty-cent elementary school tax.



2. A salary schedule for teachers in the elementary schools.
3. The codification of school laws.
4. Many local school laws were repealed by the law of 1925.
5. The employment of a state school architect.
6. An improved method of licensing teachers, supervisors, and superintendents.
7. An extensive building program for rural schools, the University of Tennessee, and the teachers colleges.
8. The conversion of the normal schools into teachers colleges.
9. Increased appropriations to all departments of the educational system.

*Retrenchment with Progress*—When Hill McAlister was inaugurated in January of 1933, he found the state budget badly out of balance with a total deficit of \$16,400,000. The state debt approximated \$89,000,000. The revenues of the state were more than fifty per cent delinquent.<sup>19</sup> It is small wonder, under these conditions, that the former state treasurer should become known as an economy governor. He had campaigned for office on the platform of a balanced budget and economy in state expenditures.<sup>20</sup> He had also promised to do for the schools whatever the state's financial condition would permit, and at the same time to take the schools out of politics by appointing a professionally trained school man to the office of commissioner.

To this post Governor McAlister appointed Walter D. Cocking, professor of school administration at George Peabody College, who was the first commissioner in the state to hold the Ph.D. degree. Cocking brought to the position a rich experience in school administration and no experience in the field of state politics. The new commissioner was destined to receive a sad lesson in the art of politics in the Volunteer State.

The members of the 1933 general assembly had been elected to office on economy platforms and when the session convened they soon made it evident that they stood on their platforms. It also became evident that schools, which received some twenty-two per cent of the total state revenue, would have to bear a considerable reduction, and that higher education would be the chief recipient of the reduction. The powerful school lobby was soon forced to defend the status quo and forego all hopes of any increase in state appropriations for education. The Public School Officers Association, meeting in Nashville on January 19, 1933, urged the legislature to make provisions for the early payment of state appropriations now due the schools, to so designate all public school funds or to prevent their being diverted into other channels, and to require all applicants for new elementary teaching certificates to have at least two years of college training and all applicants for high school certificates to have four years of such training. In an almost hopeless gesture for more money the association announced that it favored a general sales tax.

Governor McAlister and his advisors asked the general assembly to declare a recess and to appoint a committee to study the finances of the state and recommend an economy program to that body when it reconvened. This committee had the unpleasant duty of reducing the annual state budget by \$5,250,000, the amount of the annual deficit.

A reduction of fifty per cent in the budget of the University of Tennessee and the closing of all the teachers colleges for a two-year period was given serious consideration by the committee. The friends of the institutions involved organized a state-wide campaign against such drastic action and prevailed on the committee to hold open hearings. A committee of the State Board of Education worked with the legislative committee in an effort to save the colleges and prevent the curtailment of the program of the University. Higher education in the state was saved but its position was weakened by the appropriations recommended by the committee. The teachers colleges at Memphis, Murfreesboro, and Johnson City received \$56,000 each per year; Austin Peay Normal, \$36,000; Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, \$56,000; and the University of Tennessee, \$450,000. After a hard fight and many threats to close the teachers colleges, the recess committee report was adopted by the general assembly. In its final form the appropriation bill provided for reduction of sixty-six and two-thirds per cent for higher education, nineteen and one-half per cent for elementary schools, and twenty-eight per cent for secondary schools. The general assembly also extended all elementary teaching certificates for a period of two years, thereby permitting fifty-three per cent of the elementary teachers to teach for another two years without additional training. The state owed the counties and cities \$8,000,000 and the general assembly authorized the selling of bonds to pay this indebtedness. This was done and the teachers or the holders of school warrants were paid. This act did much to restore life to the decaying school system of the state. As a safeguard against such happenings in the future, the legislature provided for the remission to the school systems of the state appropriations on a monthly basis in the future. This was a forward step for education in the state.

*The Tennessee Education Association*—For many years there had existed in Tennessee a State Teachers' Association. This association embraced only about one-third of the teachers in the state and its power was more potential than real. Educational leaders in the state had long realized the need for a strong organization of the teachers, and in April, 1933, the State Teachers' Association adopted a new constitution, which provided for a representative assembly, an administrative council, and the employment of a full-time executive secretary. The Representative Assembly would be the legislative body of the association, the Administrative Council would implement the policies as determined by the assembly, and the executive secretary would transact the business

of the association in keeping with the policies fixed by the assembly and the council. Also, the name of the organization was changed to the Tennessee Education Association.

The first election of the newly organized association was held December 16, 1933. B. O. Duggan, of the University of Tennessee, was elected president and the following individuals were named to the Administrative Council: E. C. Ball, F. L. Browning, R. L. Thomas, C. H. Moore, Pat W. Kerr, and Arthur L. Rankin. This council then elected W. A. Bass, able and popular state high school supervisor, to the post of executive secretary. It also authorized the publication of the *Tennessee Teacher* each month of the school term as the official organ of the Tennessee Education Association.

This reorganization of the State Teachers' Association transformed this body into one of the most powerful groups in the state. The association was to formulate virtually all educational programs for years to come and to exert the influence necessary for enactment on the various governors and legislatures.

*The Tennessee Educational Commission*—Commissioner Cocking was soon to exert strong influence upon Governor McAlister for the chief executive asked the general assembly to enact a law providing for the appointment of an educational commission with authority to study the schools of the state, determine their needs, and report their findings to the 1935 general assembly.<sup>22</sup> Governor McAlister appointed the following men and women to the commission: Mrs. Edith Susong, Greeneville, newspaper editor; Dr. C. C. Sherrod, president of the East Tennessee State Teachers College; Paul J. Kruesi, Chattanooga, industrialist; Judge Robert L. Peck, Sr., Springfield, lawyer; C. W. Knudsen, Nashville, college professor; B. O. Duggan, Knoxville, college professor; Mrs. Thomas N. Coppedge, Memphis, civic leader; and F. L. Browning, Henderson, county school superintendent.

Commissioner Cocking was named executive officer of the commission with power to organize and conduct the work of the survey. The energetic Cocking set about to organize study groups in each county of the state for the purpose of collecting data and supplying it to the various committees of the commission. He announced the appointment of C. H. Gilmore as assistant to the director; J. S. McMurray, of Trousdale County, as secretary of the commission. The director also announced a grant of \$75,000 from the Tennessee Valley Authority which was to be used for the purpose of gathering material. It was a highly efficient organization that Cocking developed, and it spent a year in compiling and analyzing information. The first volume of the report was released to the public October 1, 1934. This volume presented the educational situation in Tennessee as the commission viewed it. Newspapers of the state were lavish in their praise of this report. The second volume, containing the commission's recommendations was published in December, although a preview of the report had been published in the press November 11, 1934. This preview had been





(Courtesy Kingsport Chamber of Commerce)

*Kingsport—Plant of Knickerbocker Press, book producers*

leaked to the papers by some undetermined source, and militated strongly against the success of the report in the general assembly of 1935. The newspapers took the position that the commission was recommending "a trebling of state appropriations for education."<sup>23</sup> Such was hardly the case as the recommendation provided that the state should relieve the local units of government of much of the cost of the school program and actually represented very little more money than had been spent for schools the previous biennium.

In the face of this unfavorable start, the forces seeking the adoption of the report organized a vigorous campaign in behalf of the now greatly maligned report. The Tennessee Education Association, the Public School Officers' Association, the State Department of Education, the State Council of Parents and Teachers, a newly organized Committee of One Hundred, and some of the members of the commission started an all-out drive to secure adoption. The enemies of the report argued that the revenues of the state would not permit such

expenditures of money. The Representative Assembly of the Tennessee Education Association in January 1935 urged the enactment of a sales tax, with the proceeds to meet the present emergency and to relieve the burden of state and county property tax. It was stipulated that nothing in such a tax should prevent the local unit from raising money for school purposes.

Governor McAllister delivered his address to the general assembly January 10 and recommended to that body the passage of a sales tax, which was estimated to raise \$11,500,000 annually. The Governor urged that \$1,000,000 of this money be used to replace the eight-cent state property tax, then \$500,000 of new money should go to the University and the teachers colleges and \$5,000,000 to elementary and high schools, and that \$2,500,000 be used for the relief of a state deficit and to match federal funds. The Nashville *Tennessean* interpreted the Governor's message as a failure to endorse the report of the educational commission.<sup>24</sup> Commissioner Cocking, the political babe in the woods, contended that this was not the case as the Governor had agreed to treat this subject in a later message.<sup>25</sup> The controversial report was lost in the battle over the sales tax. This bill was introduced in the house and senate on January 23, with J. B. Mosby, Somerville attorney, as the chief sponsor. Mosby was the administration floor leader in the senate. It had been believed that the powerful Shelby County delegation, controlled by E. H. Crump, would agree to the sales tax. However, this delegation joined the ranks of the opposition and made common cause with the merchants and newspapers in an effort to defeat the measure. The foes of the sales tax and of education were better organized than were the friends. The administration bill had set a ceiling beyond which the local unit could not spend. The Tennessee Education Association opposed this ceiling and wanted all of the proceeds of the proposed tax for schools. McAllister finally agreed to the elimination of the ceiling provision, and the administrative Council of the Education Association issued an endorsement of the administration bill. Representative Lem Motlow, of Lynchburg, on February 1, introduced a new sales tax bill which would have devoted all revenues received to the schools but would have prohibited the local units from levying any taxes for schools. The Administrative Council swung into action against the Motlow proposal. The general assembly became hopelessly ensnarled in a fight over the tax and recessed February 23, with instructions to the Finance Ways and Means Committee to find a solution to the complexities of the state's revenues. The Tennessee Property Owners' Association, the merchants, the newspapers, the "wets" with their desire for legalizing liquor, and the city political machines were concentrating their efforts against the sales tax.

The legislative recess committee cried for a reduction in state expenditures. It soon became evident that the schools would be the victim, for the old cry of close the teachers colleges was heard again. An open hearing was held by the committee on March 5, at which time the educational forces presented

their arguments for the sales tax and adequate support for the schools. The committee paid little attention to the testimony of the school lobby and recommended the closing of all teachers colleges, and a cut of fifty per cent in funds for the university. The school forces renewed their campaign and defeated the committee report when the legislature reconvened. The general assembly closed its session on April 22, 1935, without passing an appropriation or revenue bill. The chief executive called the general assembly into special session July 15, 1935, and the fight on the schools and the sales tax was renewed. However, the school forces held their lines and prevented further crippling of the state's educational system. A general appropriation bill which renewed the appropriations of the previous biennium was passed and signed by the governor.

A new departure in school lobbying was represented in the general assembly of 1935. The newly-named Tennessee Education Association assumed leadership in the movement for better schools, replacing the State Commissioner of Education as the leader of the school bloc, and the educational forces made concerted efforts to secure the support of other groups. As a result of the near tragic experiences of 1935, the Tennessee Education Association learned the value of organization, the merit of pledging legislative and gubernatorial candidates to the support of their program in advance of election, and the necessity of having the influential newspapers of the state on their side. The Tennessee Education Association was to reform its lines for a new drive in the 1937 legislature.

*The Eight Point Program*—Educational leaders of the state were dismayed by the failure of the 1935 general assembly to increase the appropriations for education, but they were not discouraged to the extent of surrendering in their crusade for better schools. Commissioner Cocking convened a conference of superintendents at secluded Camp Clements on September 16, 1935. The members of this conference turned their attention to the 1937 session of the legislature and appointed a committee of nine to formulate a program for education. This committee was composed of C. H. Moore, Ross Robinson, L. H. Brickey, G. Tillman Stewart, W. S. Donnell, W. C. Dodson, J. R. Miles, R. L. Thomas, and Walter D. Cocking. This committee drafted a Seven-Point Program which was adopted enthusiastically by the conference. This program, which was expanded by the Representative Assembly of the Tennessee Education Association, was to become the program of action for the schools to submit to the 1937 general assembly:

- I. That the state finance the minimum program of elementary education in so far as teachers' salaries are concerned, provided there be no restriction of local initiative.
- II. That the minimum length of term shall be eight (8) months for elementary schools and nine (9) months for high schools.





*Lawrenceburg—The Murray Ohio Manufacturing Company Plant*

- III. That the minimum salary for any teacher in Tennessee must not be less than \$60.00 per month, provided that, as standards of qualifications are raised and teachers progress in training and experience, the salary shall be increased in direct proportion to rise in standards and the increase in training and experience.
- IV. That all beginning teachers must have completed at least two years of training in an approved institution of higher learning.
- V. That adequate library facilities be made available for pupils in the public schools of Tennessee.
- VI. That the state encourage desirable consolidation of schools, necessary and efficient transportation, and skilled supervision, through state aid.
- VII. That adequate facilities for higher education be provided by the state.

This program was submitted to the Representative Assembly of the Tennessee Education Association on January 10, 1936. This group, after adding a point calling for the creation of "an adequate and actuarially sound retirement system for teachers," unanimously endorsed the Eight-Point Program, and authorized the launching of a campaign to secure public support for it.

W. A. Bass was placed in charge of the campaign with authority to employ personnel to assist him with the work. Joe Hatcher, political columnist for the Nashville *Tennessean*, was employed to prepare and send out news releases to the papers of the state. Hatcher was successful in getting the papers to publish his stories depicting the condition of the educational system. Bass also employed a statistician to prepare information for publicity releases. This news

service supplied information to newspapers, local educational organizations, and candidates for public office.

The educators also adopted what was, perhaps, the most daring technique ever used in an educational campaign in the state when they asked each candidate for governor and each candidate for the legislature to sign a pledge of support for the Eight-Point Program. As a consequence, the governor-elect and a majority of both houses of the general assembly were pledged to the enactment of the necessary legislation. Governor Gordon Browning lost little time in fulfilling his pledge to the Tennessee Education Association for his leaders in the general assembly introduced and passed with little opposition the educational bill designed to implement the Eight-Point Program. Elementary schools were given \$7,000,000, high schools \$750,000, the University of Tennessee \$750,000, and each four-year state college \$110,000.<sup>26</sup> It was declared to be the legislative intent for the state to assume the entire cost of a minimum school program as soon as the finances of the state would permit it to do so. It was a great victory for the school forces and education appeared to be destined for better days in the state.

*Education Meets Difficulties*—Governor Browning had promised the voters a balanced state budget in his 1936 campaign and to make this promise true he appointed a budget director with authority to impound appropriations when it appeared that the revenues of the state would not equal the expenditures. It became necessary for the budget director to impound appropriations for education. The University, the state colleges, and school libraries suffered most from this drastic but necessary action. However, the schools made progress during the Browning administration.

The Tennessee Education Association directed its campaign of 1938 toward the complete realization of its Eight-Point Program. A. D. Holt had become executive secretary of this group upon the elevation of Bass to the office of commissioner. Holt waged an able and aggressive campaign, pledging candidates for the legislature to work for the enactment of the program. Prentice Cooper, the successful gubernatorial candidate had pledged support to the program, but at the same time had promised the people a balanced budget and no new taxes. Governor Cooper had been educated in private schools and many of the educational leaders felt that he was not too kindly disposed toward increased expenditures for public education. The administration education appropriation bill did little more than hold the line for schools. High schools received a \$200,000 increase, aid for school transportation became a new item in the budget, and \$325,000 was appropriated for textbooks at the expense of the taxpayers. Appropriations for school libraries were reduced by \$40,000 and for each four-year state college by \$10,000.<sup>27</sup> School leaders felt that free textbooks had been provided at the expense of libraries and higher education. The governor pointed

with pride to the fact that total appropriations for educational purposes had been increased. Strained relations between the powerful Tennessee Education Association and the Governor resulted.

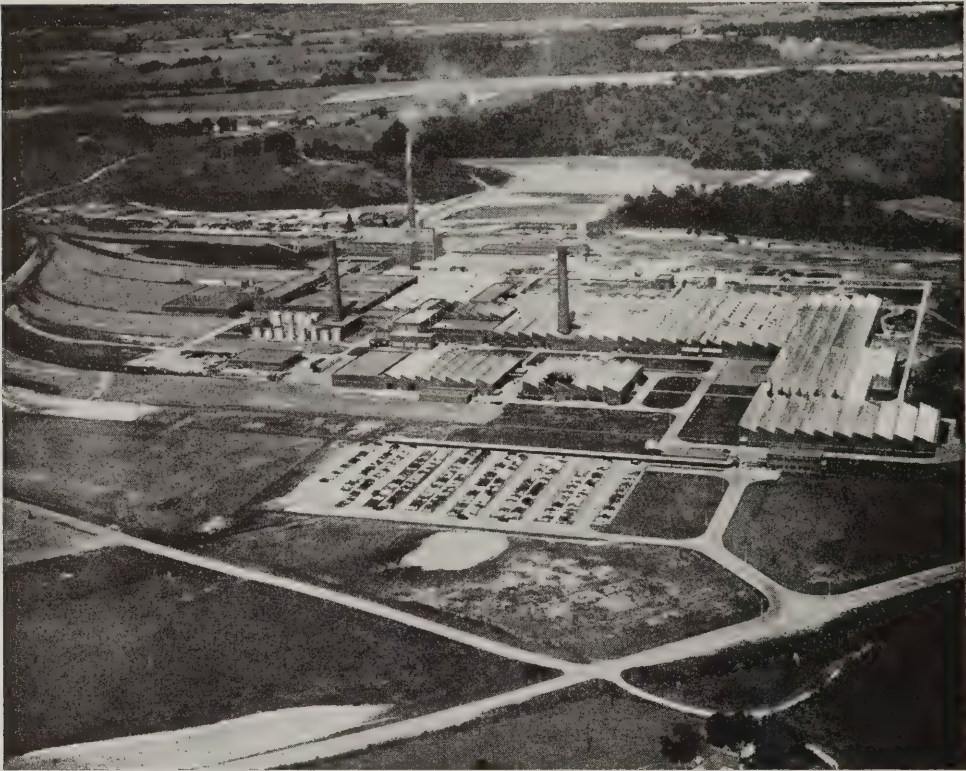
With the economic depression approaching an end and with war looming on the horizon, the school leaders hoped for a much better financial appropriation from the 1941 general assembly. Governor Cooper, however, was still pledged to economy and schools fared only a fraction better in the 1941 general assembly. The University of Tennessee received an increase of \$150,000, the elementary schools were increased \$250,000, and the high schools received \$200,000 in new money, while the state colleges were given no increase.<sup>28</sup>

World War II brought havoc to the public schools of the state. Large numbers of young men and women left the teaching profession to enter the armed forces. Countless others left the schoolroom to accept more remunerative employment in defense plants. As the legislative session of 1943 approached, Governor Cooper adhered to his program of economy and the members of the assembly accepted his recommendations. There appeared to be little comprehension by those in authority of the tragic condition of the schools. The elementary and high schools received little increase in funds and the institutions of higher learning fared little better.<sup>29</sup> Numerous teaching positions were filled with untrained and uncertified teachers. The plight of the schools became the object of so much concern among the people that Governor Cooper called the general assembly to meet in special session on April 10, 1944. This special session appropriated \$3,200,000 to give each elementary and high school teacher a raise of \$20.00 per month. The relief was temporary as the rising cost of living soon consumed this small raise. Education barely held its own during the six-year tenure of Governor Prentice Cooper. Perhaps, the greatest contribution of the Shelbyville governor was the inauguration of a program of textbooks at state expense.

Jim Nance McCord was elected governor in 1944 and with his assumption of office a new day dawned for the schools of the state. The general assembly of 1945, on the strong recommendation of the new governor, raised all basic educational appropriations by a reasonable amount and made a special appropriation of \$4,050,000 for the purpose of guaranteeing each teacher a raise of \$25.00 per month. This legislature also established a fund of \$500,000 to go to the institutions of higher learning and to be used for the benefit of returning war veterans.<sup>30</sup>

*Education and the Sales Tax*—Notwithstanding the efforts of the Governor, the general assembly, and local units to bolster the school situation, the years of 1945 and 1946 witnessed a further deterioration in the educational system of the state. Industry was attracting an increasing number of teachers; the failure during the war years to train young men and women for the teaching profes-





(Courtesy Morristown Chamber of Commerce)

*Morristown—American Enka Corporation*

sion, the rapid rise of the birth rate, and a dire shortage of class rooms contributed to the acuteness of the school situation in the state. The Tennessee Education Association, with the support of many strong civic groups, launched an intensive campaign for better schools. The *Memphis Commercial Appeal* assigned its star reporter, Robert Talley, the task of writing a series of stories on the plight of public education. It became increasingly evident that new taxes would have to be levied to save the educational system of the state. Governor McCord had been reelected in 1946, and with the support of many of the newspapers and numerous civic organizations, he recommended a two per cent sales tax to the 1947 legislature with the principal proceeds to go the schools. This tax was enacted without major opposition and education had made a tremendous forward stride.<sup>31</sup> The enactment of the sales tax heralded a new era for the public schools of the state. This act appropriated \$24,870,932 for the public elementary and secondary schools and stipulated that \$19,500,000

must be contributed by local governments. The University of Tennessee was given an annual appropriation of \$3,073,200, the largest in the history of the University.

Governor McCord had gambled his political future for the schools of the state. He had recommended the sales tax in spite of the advice of some of the most astute political leaders in the state. Subsequent events indicated that the political leaders were right for the Governor was defeated for a third term in 1948. However, he had saved the schools from chaos and lightened the burden of future governors.

*The Retirement System*—Teachers in the tax supported schools of Tennessee had long felt the need of a retirement system before they embraced it in their Eight Point Program of 1936. Large numbers of devoted teachers were faced with a penniless or meagre-income old age under the haphazard system of previous years. A few city systems had retirement plans of their own conception. However, there had been no uniform state plan and the political leaders of the state had been indifferent to the plight of the school teachers. It was with feelings of trepidation that the Tennessee Education Association made its first public request for an actuarially sound plan for retirement. The request received little support as the public appeared to be apathetic and the legislators were equally indifferent to the plight of the approximately 25,000 teachers. Governor Gordon Browning regretted that the revenues of the state would not permit remedial action. His immediate successor in office, Prentice Cooper, manifested little interest in providing the pedagogues with an old age income. It remained for Governor McCord, a staunch supporter of the teachers, in 1945, to arouse the members of the legislature to the need of retirement pay for educators of the state. The Governor and his legislative leaders brought about the enactment of a bill that appropriated \$1,200,000 each year for retirement pay. The act further provided that each teacher would contribute five per cent of his annual salary which would be matched with state funds. A teacher could retire on thirty years of service or at the age of sixty. Retirement became mandatory at the age of sixty-five with permission to teach on a yearly basis until the age of seventy.<sup>32</sup> The new system was neither ideal nor adequate but it provided a notable start in the right direction. As teachers started exercising the retirement right it became evident that many of them were receiving a mere pittance in pay. The legislature, at the behest of Governor Gordon Browning, set a minimum retirement wage. This act, along with numerous private pension bills, upset the precarious balance of the retirement system and made it actuarially unsound. Many teachers became alarmed and sought the aid of Governor Frank Clement in putting the system on an actuarially sound basis. On the request of Governor Clement, the Seventy-eighth General Assembly appropriated \$1,000,000 in additional funds for each year of the biennium. Governor

Clement also recommended to the legislature of 1953 the appointment of a committee to determine the possibility and advisability of integrating the teacher retirement and the federal Social Security program without reducing the benefits to the members. The Governor appointed the following people on the committee: W. R. Snodgrass, State Comptroller, chairman; Commissioner Quill E. Cope, Chairman of the Tennessee Teachers Retirement System; Mrs. Beulah Sharp, Acting Executive Secretary, Tennessee State Retirement System; Tom Blair, Director, Department of Old Age and Survivors Insurance; and Mrs. C. Frank Scott, member of the Legislative Council. Findings were not ready for the Seventy-ninth General Assembly, but Governor Clement prevailed on the body to appropriate \$4,000,000 additional money for the system for the next biennium, which placed the system on an actuarially sound basis for the first time.

The Governor and his committee recommended to the 1957 general assembly that the Tennessee Teachers Retirement System and the federal Social Security plan be combined. A referendum among the teachers was authorized and this large group voted by an overwhelming majority for the combination. Thus within a period of twelve years a new day had dawned for teachers in the tax-supported schools of the state, for no longer did the threat of a penniless old age hang over their heads.

*Public Schools Continue to Need Additional Funds.*—Gordon Browning returned to the Governor's office in January, 1949. The able soldier of two world wars had long been known as a friend of education. It was during his previous administration that much of the Eight Point Program had been enacted. The Carroll County lawyer was once more a stalwart champion of education. The Browning program, as passed by the 1949 legislature, called for \$39,277,932 for elementary and secondary schools, \$4,573,200, an all time high, for the University of Tennessee, \$485,000 for each of the state colleges, and \$918,750 for A & I State University. This same act increased the appropriations for all other state educational agencies.<sup>33</sup> A new high had been set for educational funds in the state.

Nevertheless, the rising cost of living forced many teachers to seek employment in private industry or accept teaching positions in states paying higher salaries. Tennessee had many teachers teaching on permits or without proper certification. Income of the individual citizens had reached a new high and the people appeared to feel that more money should be given to the schools.

The general assembly of 1951 increased the funds available to the elementary and secondary schools to \$44,964,473 and provided for an increase of this amount of \$1,000,000 for the second year of the biennium. The University of Tennessee was given an annual appropriation of \$4,386,163 while similar increases were granted to each of the state colleges.<sup>34</sup>

Governor Browning had done heroic work for the public schools but his



management of political affairs evidently did not please the people for he was defeated for a third consecutive term in 1952 by the young and aggressive Frank G. Clement of Dickson County.

Education fared well in the first legislature of the Clement administration. A total of \$52,610,433 was appropriated for the elementary and secondary schools for the first year of the biennium with a provision that this sum be increased to \$64,159,000 for the second year. The University of Tennessee received \$5,449,163 for each year and the state colleges received increased appropriations on the basis of enrollments in each institution. Memphis State College received the highest amount, \$619,000, with other institutions receiving slightly less funds.<sup>35</sup>

Personnel problems of the public schools did not improve with the increased appropriations and higher salaries. The cost of living continued to mount and more and more teachers sought more lucrative fields. The Tennessee Education Association dedicated 1954 to a campaign for increased state revenues and increased salaries for teachers. Governor Clement gave the campaign his hearty support. Numerous civic minded citizens gave vocal support to the campaign for more money for education. Governor Clement, on January 11, 1955, called on the general assembly to vote taxes sufficient to maintain the school program from the elementary level through the institutions of higher learning. The members of this body responded by increasing the sales tax from two to three per cent. The appropriation for the elementary and secondary schools was increased to \$69,531,900, while the University of Tennessee received \$6,352,000 and the state colleges received comparable increases based on enrollment in each institution.<sup>36</sup> Education had achieved a new high in the history of the state and many people appeared to believe that the state had now reached the limit of its financial ability.

The 1957 general assembly, the last meeting of this body under the guiding hand of Governor Clement, was to face a request from the Tennessee Education Association for a \$400 per year increase in salary for every teacher in the state. It soon became evident that the honeymoon between the young governor and the teachers was at an end. Governor Clement announced that the revenues of the state would not permit more than a \$200 a year salary raise. For a period of three weeks the forces supporting the Education Association and the supporters of the Governor were deadlocked. The lower house of the legislature seemed to be firmly committed to the larger raise while the upper house supported the wishes of the Governor. Finally, the chief executive announced that he would sign a bill that would give the \$200 raise and guarantee to distribute to the teachers any excess in funds over the anticipated collection figures. The Education Association failed to endorse this plan, but the Governor garnered sufficient strength in the general assembly to bring about passage. Again, a new high had been reached in educational appropriations for the



(Courtesy of the Company)

*Nashville—Home of Life and Casualty Insurance Company of Tennessee*

state.<sup>37</sup> Subsequent years established the validity of the contention that revenues would be above expectations and the teachers have received an annual bonus from these funds.

Buford Ellington, Commissioner of Agriculture in the Clement cabinet, won a hard fought victory over three strong opponents in the 1958 elections. The new chief executive assumed office with the promise of a program of austerity in the state. In spite of a vigorous campaign on the part of the Tennessee Education Association for a large increase in school funds, the teachers were given a salary raise of only \$100 per year. Ellington, as had his predecessor in office, voiced the opinion that further raises would have to be on the local level. A number of county and city systems have raised the salaries of their teachers from local funds.<sup>38</sup>

*Integration in Tennessee Schools*—Relations between the white and Negro races in Tennessee had been satisfactory for more than half a century when the Supreme Court handed down its historic decision on May 17, 1954. The immediate reaction to the decision was one of moderation. The *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, in a deliberate mood, editorially said, "The main thing now is for the American people to face this thing squarely, as an accomplished fact, and work out our destiny for the general good and the greater glory of our nation."<sup>39</sup> Moderation was the keynote of the *Nashville Banner* and other leading newspapers of the state. Governor Clement advised a calm study of the situation and no hasty decisions. J. M. Smith, president of Memphis State University, announced that he would wait for a "specific decision" from the court before determining a course of action, while Milton Bowers, president of the Memphis Board of Education, announced that it was his belief that the Negroes would continue to use their own schools. In spite of public statements of educational leaders that moderation was the course to be followed, the air over Tennessee was charged with electricity awaiting for a specific suit for admission of Negroes into a specific school. Several young Negroes brought suit in the district court at Memphis for admission into Memphis State University, after having been denied the privilege of registration by President J. M. Smith. Judge Marion Boyd ordered the candidates admitted after pleading for a better understanding between the races in Memphis. The State Board of Education had approved a plan of gradual integration for the Memphis institution, permitting the enrollment of fourth year college students the first year and lowering the level a year at a time until all four years were integrated. This plan was ruled unsatisfactory by the Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. President Smith, in an apparent effort to save the segregated status of the University, then announced that all applicants for admission would have to pass an entrance examination. Nine prospective Negro students passed this entrance examination for the term opening in September, 1958. President Smith then asked the



August meeting of the State Board of Education to defer integration at Memphis State for one year as he believed that integration would be accompanied by violence. The board granted his request and the President announced to the faculty and students that he had exhausted all legal means and that the school would admit Negro students at the beginning of the present school year (1959). Meanwhile, integration had been accomplished without fanfare at some of the other colleges of the state.

The first real integration of public schools in the state took place at Clinton in September 1956. Under orders of the district court at Knoxville, the board of education had instructed the principal of the Clinton High School to admit Negro students. There seemed to be no widespread disapproval of this action until John Kasper, a professional agitator, appeared on the scene to bring about disorder and violence. Within a few days the disturbances had become so violent that Governor Clement despatched the state guard to Clinton to preserve order. Peace was restored and the school became the first public school in the state to obey the mandate of the Supreme Court. Kasper was sentenced and served a term in prison for his actions at Clinton.

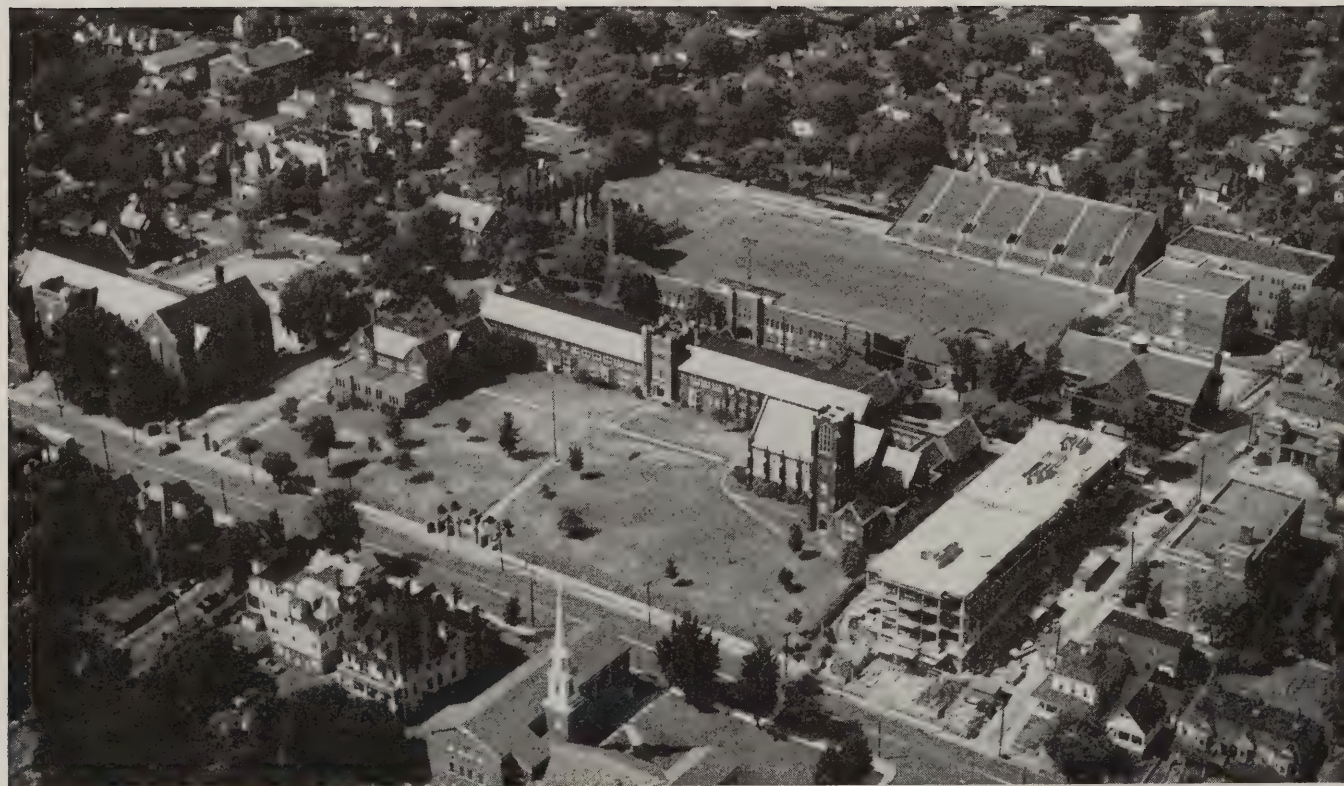
Meanwhile, the Nashville Board of Education had formulated and submitted to the district court a plan of gradual integration. This plan, providing for the admission of Negro students to the first grade and raising the level thereafter by one grade per year, had been approved by the court and there was apparently little dissatisfaction on the part of the citizens of the city. The Hattie Cotton Elementary School opened its doors to Negro first graders in September, 1957. Kasper, free of prison while his case was being appealed to a higher court, came to the capital city to organize and lead the opposition to integration. A bomb explosion all but completely wrecked the Hattie Cotton building. Kasper again found himself under arrest, was tried and found guilty of inciting a riot. This professional agitator recently lost an appeal and served an additional prison term.

Tennessee has remained comparatively free from legislation designed to preserve segregation in the schools or close the schools. Governor Frank Clement frowned on all attempts to pass such legislation and his successor in office has pursued a similar course of moderation. The net result has been temporary disturbances among the people, but, in the main, the citizens of Tennessee have been contented with a course of moderation and waiting.

Education has made great progress in the proud Volunteer State since the start of this century. The school population has materially increased, the educational level of the citizens has been greatly improved, and the teachers are receiving the highest salaries in the history of the state. While much remains to be done, the people may well take pride in their progress.

## CHAPTER XXXVI—NOTES

1. Robert H. White, *Development of the Tennessee Educational Organization, 1796-1929*, p. 146.
2. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 13.
3. White, *Tennessee Educational Organization*, 146.
4. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 77.
5. In this period of Tennessee history a secondary school was defined as a district elementary school of eight grades.
6. *Tennessee School Report for the Year, 1902* (Nashville, 1902), 353.
7. *Ibid.*, 53-55.
8. *Ibid.*, 22. For a good discussion of the educational campaigns of this period see Charles Lee Lewis, *Philander Priestly Claxton: Crusader for Public Education* (Knoxville, 1948), Chap. XIII.
9. *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 8, 1908.
10. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 175.
11. *Ibid.*, 247-248.
12. *Ibid.*, 250.
13. *Ibid.*, 264.
14. *Ibid.*, 287.
15. *Nashville Banner*, February 21, 1917.
16. *Ibid.*, March 31, 1923.
17. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 343.
18. *Nashville Banner*, January 15, 1930.
19. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 389.
20. *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, July 23, 1932.
21. *Ibid.*, July 23, 1932.
22. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1933, Chap. CIV.
23. *Nashville Tennessean*, January 12, 1935.
24. *Ibid.*, January 12, 1935.
25. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 432.
26. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1937, Ch. 127, p. 532-549.
27. *Ibid.*, 1939, Chap. XVI, 55-71.
28. *Ibid.*, 1941, Chap. VIII, 25-40.
29. *Ibid.*, 1943, Chap. I, 15-33.
30. *Ibid.*, 1945, Chap. CLXXX, 583-606.
31. *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, March 15, 1945.
32. *The Tennessee Teacher*, March 1945.
33. *Acts of Tennessee*, 1949, Chap. IX, 41-80.
34. *Ibid.*, 1951, Chap. CCLIX, 1124-1139.
35. *Ibid.*, 1953, Chap. LXXVIII, 244-267.
36. *Ibid.*, 1955, Chap. CXXXVI, 450-503.
37. *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 17, 1957.
38. *The Tennessee Teacher*, May 1959.
39. *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, May 18, 1954.
40. *Knoxville Journal*, September 8, 1956.



*Aerial View of the University of Chattanooga*

(Courtesy of the University)



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## CHAPTER XXXVII

### *Religion in Twentieth Century Tennessee*

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TENNESSEANS HAVE BEEN a religious and God-fearing people since the admission of the state into the Union in 1796. The first constitution of the state declared the faith of the founders of the state, when they wrote into that document the clause, "No person who denies the being of God or a future state of rewards and punishments, shall hold any office in the civil department of this State."<sup>1</sup> This deep-rooted affirmation of belief in the existence of God and a hereafter was reaffirmed in the constitution of 1834 and it remains a part of the present constitution of the state. The general assembly has further affirmed this fundamental belief by the passage of legislation guaranteeing that there should be no departure from this doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

*Fundamentalism Versus Modernism*—The first quarter of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of a great controversy in the nation between those who believed in a literal and conservative interpretation of the Bible and those who believed in a close examination of the scriptures as history and literature. The first group became known as Fundamentalists and the latter group was called Modernists. This controversy raged in the pulpits, the academic halls, the press, and the literary magazines of the nation. Tennesseans did not long delay taking sides in the great dispute. Sermons were preached from many pulpits on the subject of a modern interpretation of the Bible or on a literal reading and believing of Scripture. Virtually every denomination in the state was concerned with the controversy. Pope Pius X expressed the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church when he denounced the trend toward Modernism and called for a return to thirteenth century scholasticism as the major subject in education, the prohibition of any publication that had not passed the rigid inspection of the Holy Office, and forbiddance of any discussion of Modernism.<sup>3</sup> The faithful Catholics of Tennessee did not seriously question the edict from the Vatican, and the Catholic Church avoided serious involvement in this state.

The Protestant Episcopal Church in Tennessee, while having a strong form of church government, avoided any serious disturbance on the issue. Bishop Thomas Gailor allowed the clergy wide discretion in discussing the problem. Most of the controversy in this church had to do with a literal belief in the

Apostles' Creed, and the clergy apparently made little effort to check on the beliefs of their parishioners.

The Presbyterian Church was probably more affected internally by the issue than any other religious denomination in the state. However, no Tennessee ministers were called to trial by this church and each minister appeared to have absolute freedom of expression. It was in other states that preachers of this faith incurred the ire of governing bodies, and a few ministers were ordered to cease their modernistic teachings or to surrender their pulpits.<sup>4</sup>

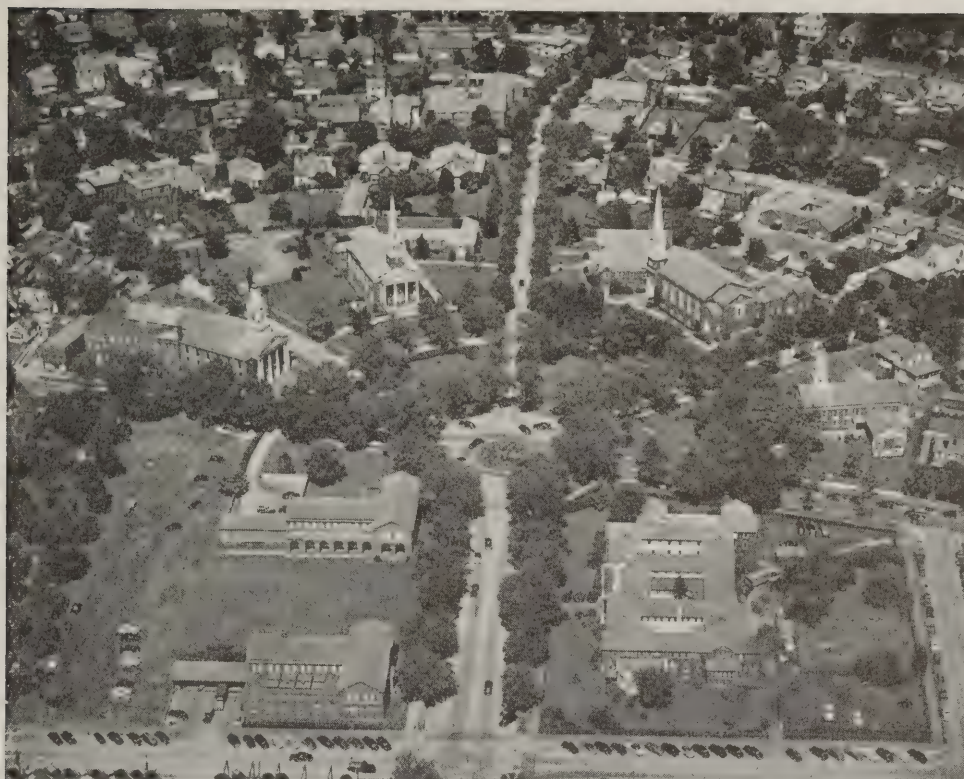
The Tennessee Convention of the Southern Baptist Church, the largest religious group in the state from the standpoint of numbers, viewed with alarm all forms of modernism, but seemed to concern itself with denouncing the trend in other religious bodies. Most of the Baptist clergymen were strict Fundamentalists and as such were in harmony with the thinking of their church members.

The Methodist Episcopal Church was sharply divided in opinions concerning the question. The younger Methodist ministers, many of them freshly graduated from liberal theological seminaries, appeared to be willing to accept the idea that there was no conflict between scientific investigation and the Bible. The older and less well-educated clergymen held to a literal interpretation of Holy Writ. Nevertheless, the prevailing belief in the Methodist Church was Fundamentalist with the various conferences and assemblies frowning on modernistic teachings.<sup>5</sup>

The Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) had been torn asunder by the issue of modernism in the late nineteenth century, when a large segment of its membership withdrew over the issue of instrumental music in worship and missionary societies to form the denomination known as the Church of Christ. This schism in the Disciples was basically over the issue of modernism, with the Church of Christ becoming the conservative group, denouncing modernism, and insisting upon the doctrine of inerrancy of the Bible.

The controversy eventually was to center around the origin of man. That it waited so long to reach this question was perhaps due to the fact that Tennesseans were a long time in discovering Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species*. It was possibly the space devoted to this and related subjects in the newspapers of the time and in the various periodicals, church and secular, that brought the question to the forefront in Tennessee and resulted in its becoming a subject for action by the general assembly.

*An Anti-Evolution Law is Enacted*—At the 1925 session of the legislature, John W. Butler, a member of the house of representatives from Macon County, introduced an act making it unlawful for any teacher in any school supported in whole or in part by the state to teach any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught by the Bible and to teach instead that



(Courtesy Kingsport Chamber of Commerce)

*Kingsport—Church Circle*

man is descended from a lower order of animals. This bill received an overwhelming majority in each chamber of the legislature. It also quickly challenged the attention of the world. Governor Austin Peay received large volumes of mail, some letters urging that he sign the bill and some pleading with him to veto it. Austin Peay was a staunch member of the Baptist Church and he apparently gave scant attention to the group urging a veto. He promptly signed the measure and sent to the general assembly a strong message approving of the passage of the law. He said, "Nobody will deny that the Holy Bible teaches that man was created by God in his own image." The Governor probably voiced the sentiments of the majority of the people of the state in his message supporting his signing of the new law. Also, the general assembly and the chief executive had set the stage for one of the most dramatic courtroom scenes ever staged in the Volunteer State.

*Dayton and the Trial*—The new law safeguarding the moral and spiritual



concepts of youth had been on the statute books only a short time when it was attacked in the courts of Rhea County through the indictment of John Thomas Scopes, a young teacher in the Rhea County High School at Dayton.

There is a story extant in Dayton that the trial started as a result of an attempt on the part of a group of young men to make Dayton famous or in the vernacular of the area "to put Dayton on the map." This group of young men knew Professor Scopes and asked him for permission to start a rumor that he was teaching evolution in his biology classes at the high school. The weavers of this yarn assert that Scopes readily participated in the scheme.\* If this story is true the fabricators of the plan accomplished their purpose, for Dayton soon became a focal point of the biggest news story ever to originate in Tennessee.

Governor Peay is said to have believed that this law would never be tested in the courts, and it appears certain that a vast majority of the legislators who voted for its passage had no idea that they were setting the stage for a great comic drama at the little mountain town of Dayton.<sup>6</sup> Scopes was indicted by the Rhea County grand jury on May 25, 1925, and a small story went out over the news services to the press of the nation. Overnight Dayton was on the front page of every major newspaper in the country.

The case was set for trial in the circuit court of Rhea County, presided over by Judge John T. Raulston. Attorney-General A. T. Stewart, a veritable youngster at the practice of law but the proud possessor of an unbounded amount of boldness and courage, would prosecute the case. John Randolph Neal, former dean of the University of Tennessee Law School, a brilliant but eccentric lawyer, and a constant crusader for the rights of men, announced that he would undertake the defense of the now famous Scopes. He was joined by the able Dudley Field Malone, renowned New York attorney, and the American Civil Liberties Union despatched Arthur Garfield Hayes to Tennessee to aid the counsel for the defense. William Jennings Bryan, three times the Democratic nominee for the presidency, announced that he would offer his services on behalf of the state of Tennessee and according to the dictates of his conscience. This was followed by the news that Clarence Darrow, renowned agnostic who had defended Leopold and Loeb, had tendered his talents to the defense. Rarely had one trial been assured of so much legal talent.

Dayton took on a festive air and in many respects the little Tennessee

\* The writer, in 1939, spent several days visiting the public schools of Rhea County. The information contained in this section was obtained by him from residents of the town. This same information is discussed in Donald Davidson's book which is later cited in the notes of this chapter.

Gilbert Govan and James W. Livingood, *The Chattanooga Country* (New York, 1952), 429-33, is another good account.

Warren Allen, "Backgrounds of the Scopes Trial at Dayton, Tennessee (M. A. thesis, University of Tennessee, 1959) develops the "yarn" in detail and also the distortions in the newspaper accounts.

county town gave the appearance of a mediaeval fair. One newspaper described it as half circus, half revival meeting.<sup>7</sup> Dayton became the Mecca for famous preachers, scientists, star reporters, famous writers, mendicant and itinerant revivalists, and souvenir peddlers. The hotels and boarding houses of the little town were taxed to capacity, the merchants did a thriving business, and the newly established hamburger stands could hardly serve all their patrons. The rural folk of Rhea and surrounding counties came to Dayton to see the famous lawyers, munch hamburgers and gulp lemonade, and listen to numerous exhorters reminding them of the glories of heaven and the terrors of hell.

The scene in the courtroom was little less hectic than the scene outside of the building. The domino box courtroom could not begin to seat the eager listeners. Judge Raulston instructed the sheriff to permit people to stand around the walls. The prosecution asked for a reindictment of Scopes on the grounds that there might be an error in the first true bill. The judge charged this jury by reading the act of the general assembly and following with a serious reading of the first chapter of Genesis.<sup>8</sup> Thus the trial commenced in the admonition of the Lord. The selecting of a jury involved long hours of questioning from counsel for both sides. The twelve men selected were largely farm folk of Rhea County, Fundamentalist in their religious beliefs, addicted to a daily reading of the Bible, and rather regular attendants at Protestant churches.

The trial opened July 13, 1925, and for two days produced no undue excitement, but on the third day Clarence Darrow objected to opening court each day with prayer. This objection shocked the presiding judge, the people of Tennessee, and their staunch Baptist governor. The Governor from his vacation retreat in Battle Creek, Michigan, wired Walter White, superintendent of county schools, to the effect that it was a poor cause that runs away from prayer.<sup>9</sup> Judge Raulston, thus encouraged, ruled against Darrow and announced that whenever possible he always had his court opened with prayer. Darrow and his associates must have realized that an atmosphere hostile to their cause was being established.

Scopes soon became the forgotten man in this arena of legal battle. The issue soon became the agnosticism of Darrow versus the Fundamentalism of the old Nebraska orator. Darrow declared that he would break the "Chinese Wall" which Bryan was trying to erect around Tennessee. The great Chicago lawyer said: "This is as brazen and bold an attempt to destroy liberty as was ever seen in the Middle Ages. . . . Not a single line of any constitution can withstand bigotry and ignorance when it seeks to destroy the rights of the individual."<sup>10</sup> The Tennessee heat, on July 20, drove the proceedings out of the courthouse to bleacher seats that had been erected on the lawn. There Bryan and Darrow hammered at each other. Other participants in the great contest were forgotten as the two giants exchanged blows. Darrow, in the opinion of most observers, drove his opponent into positions which he could not logically defend.

The trial came to an end on July 21 when Scopes was found guilty by a jury of his peers and Judge Raulston fined him \$100. Thus ended the greatest courtroom drama in the history of the state. The drugstore loafers had accomplished their purpose. Dayton was on the map and Tennessee had become the laughing stock of much of the western world.

The Great Commoner died at Dayton on July 25, four days after the conclusion of his last role in an American court. The case, however, was appealed to the supreme court of Tennessee. The justices upheld the constitutionality of the law, but held that the trial judge had erred in fixing the fine, for that was the privilege of the jury. Scopes had left the employ of the Rhea County Board of Education and Chief Justice Grafton Green suggested to the attorney-general that the whole thing be forgotten in order to add to the peace and dignity of the state.<sup>11</sup>

Tennesseans continued, in spite of the Dayton trial, to take the issue of Fundamentalism seriously. Fundamentalist sects in Tennessee enjoyed an unprecedented growth. Such denominations as the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God, and the Assembly of God began establishing congregations throughout the state. One branch of the Church of God maintains its headquarters at Cleveland, Tennessee, and has grown considerably in numbers in the state. Revivalism was not dead in twentieth century Tennessee. Prominent state revivalists took up the cudgels for the cause of religion, with Burke Culpepper and H. A. Butts holding meetings throughout the state.

Previous to the famous Dayton trial Tennessee had been the recipient of several visits from Billy Sunday, former professional baseball player turned evangelist.

*Billy Sunday Comes to Memphis*—One of the greatest revival meetings in the history of Memphis was conducted by Billy Sunday. This meeting, conducted in an especially built tabernacle on Front Street in downtown Memphis, lasted for nearly two weeks and attracted thousands of people to hear the evangelist and witness his famous pulpit gyrations. The evangelist arrived in Memphis with his full complement of workers and Mrs. Sunday, known by the familiar title of "Ma." *The Commercial Appeal*, under the editorship of a staunch Catholic, accorded the preacher a royal welcome and made his sermons front-page news. On April 6, 1924, Sunday entered the pulpit, removed his coat, lifted his arms while shouting "Let the hosts of Hell come on." This challenge was hurled before a full congregation and was the spectacular beginning of a spectacular series of sermons. The staid and sober *Commercial Appeal* assigned one of its ace reporters, Sterling Tracy, the task of covering the Sunday philipics. Tracy wrote a front-page story each day, with long quotes from the sermons, a summary of the number of people to hit the "sawdust trail," and a description of the response of the people. The paper also carried a special



front-page column under the caption "Sunday Sidelights."<sup>12</sup> Several thousand Memphians marched down the aisles at the singing of the invitational hymns to promise Billy Sunday and God to lead a new life under the auspices of the church of their choice. Cards on these repenters were filled out by Sunday assistants and sent to the church designated by the repentant individual. The Sunday revivals were a community effort with Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches cooperating. The press kept the issue fresh in the minds of the people and the evangelist gave them a full measure of religious fervor and pulpit gymnastics.

Sunday returned to Memphis on February 6, 1925, again to attack the hosts of sin. A crowd of several hundred well wishers met him at the station. This time he preached for more than a week in the new Municipal Auditorium. As was the case on his previous visit, the evangelist received a royal welcome from the daily papers and at each service several hundred Memphians declared their intention of leading a new life. He also held revivals in the other large cities of the state.

*Other Religious Activities in Tennessee*—Nashville also was a focal point of religious fervor in the period of the Dayton trial. The Churches of Christ, always a strong sect in the capital city, secured the use of the Ryman Auditorium for a city-wide revival, and brought N. B. Hardeman, college president and evangelist, to the city for a two-weeks meeting. Hardeman preached at each service to a full house and secured many converts for his denomination in this meeting. Meanwhile, H. A. Butts and Burke Culpepper were holding services of a week's duration in Methodist churches in West Tennessee. The Presbyterian Church tried valiantly to remain aloof from the wave of religious revivalism that was sweeping the state, but many Presbyterian churches, fearful of losing members to more aggressive groups, scheduled revivals of their own. The Baptist church eagerly joined the sweeping tide of evangelism and rallied its members to bring in converts.

This wave of revivalism bore many of the characteristics of the Great Awakening period of more than one hundred years before. The people did not shout, but they attended church with the same eager fervor of their ancestors. They aligned themselves against sin and the demon rum, becoming staunch defenders of the prohibition laws and opposing the presidential candidacy of Alfred E. Smith on the grounds that he favored the repeal of prohibition.\*

*Billy Graham*—A number of Protestant congregations cooperated in 1951 to bring the rapidly rising young evangelist, Billy Graham, to a month-long meet-

\* The writer attended many Protestant evangelistic services during this period and observed that almost every revival was characterized by one or more sermons on prohibition. He also observed that many of the preachers pointed out what they believed to be the dangers inherent in electing a Catholic president.

ing in Memphis. The city was conditioned for this event by a series of cottage prayer meetings for the success of the coming revival. Local ministers preached sermons on the importance of hearing the youthful evangelist and supporting his efforts. The daily papers devoted columns of space to the future meeting and the past career of the earnest worker in the vineyard of the Lord. The way had been well paved when Graham arrived to open his series of services in the Shelby County Building of the Mid-South Fair on May 19, 1951. *The Commercial Appeal*, ever sensitive to the moral tone of the community, editorially advocated attendance at the great revival.<sup>13</sup> Ten thousand people crowded the arena that afternoon to hear Graham denounce the people of the western powers for their sinful ways. The evangelist said that Communism was not to be feared as much as moral decadence in the United States.<sup>14</sup> Six days later the young evangelist announced to his congregation that he would go to Korea to get the feel of combat.<sup>15</sup> Crowds grew to the extent that it was necessary to move the services from the Fairgrounds to the Crump Stadium, which would seat 30,000 people. Graham, on May 26, held a special service for teen-agers and at the invitation 614 young Memphians marched down the aisles to give their hand to the smiling preacher. For several days a blimp had been hovering over the city with a huge sign painted on its side advertising a popular beer. Finally it floated over the stadium while Graham was exhorting his listeners. In the fervor of the moment one lady rose from her seat screaming, "If I had a machine gun I would shoot that thing from the air." Memphians were at a high pitch of religious fervor.

Tennessee newspapers, on May 23, 1953, announced that Governor Frank Clement, a friend and golfing companion of the evangelist was considering joining the Graham evangelistic team. When interviewed, the chief executive declined to comment on the possibility. Graham pronounced Clement a dedicated Christian and a fine orator of the old school. However, Graham did not confirm the possibility of Clement's becoming a recruit in his service. The lure of Billy Graham failed to steer the Governor away from the charm of politics.<sup>16</sup>

The religious fervor has not ceased in Tennessee. Memphis, at the present, has more churches than automobile service stations.<sup>17</sup> Downtown churches have moved to elaborate new edifices in the suburban sections, notably the Linden Avenue Christian Church and the Second Presbyterian Church. What has happened in Memphis is probably typical of the other three large cities of the state. Many churches, due to crowded conditions and the Sunday plans of their parishioners, have instituted an early Sunday morning service in addition to the traditional eleven o'clock service. This is especially true in the Episcopal, Methodist, and Churches of Christ bodies. There are no available figures from a church census less than twenty years old. Therefore, it is not possible, if it ever was, to give an accurate accounting of church affiliation among the people of Tennessee. However, the best available sources indicate that in 1960 some



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Oak Ridge—Part of East Village Residential Area, with “The Church Around The Corner” in Foreground*

sixty-three per cent of the American people have a church affiliation.<sup>18</sup> It is safe to say that fully that percentage of the people of Tennessee belong to some church.

Methods of attracting people to the churches have changed greatly within the past quarter of a century. Some churches that once had a small staid sign in front of their building now have bright neon lights urging the people to enter and hear the doctrine of Fundamentalism. The Church of Christ, which has long shied away from modernism, now summons the faithful with modern lighting and runs advertisements on the church pages of the daily papers giving sermon subjects and inviting visitors to come and hear the unadorned teachings of the Church. A number of Methodist churches have also adopted the newspaper advertising technique and have been joined in this procedure by an increasing number of Baptist churches. The Episcopalians and Presby-



terians have more nearly maintained their staid dignity and refrained from the crass merchandising methods of the world.

Most churches have also adopted the technique of the men's club, holding monthly dinner meetings in parish halls or educational annexes. A part of the standard equipment of the modern city church is a well-equipped kitchen in which food for more than one hundred religious men may be prepared. This methodology has brought an increasing number of men into the activities of the church.

Although the methods and procedures of the church have changed in Tennessee, the theology remains basically orthodox and fundamental. The churches have not carried liberalism to the extent of integrating their congregations, nor have they accepted the idea of a social doctrine of Christianity. Rather they have remained constant in their devotion to the ideas of their ancestors.

#### CHAPTER XXXVII—NOTES

1. The Constitution of the State of Tennessee—1796, Article VIII, Section 2.
2. T. H. Alexander, *Austin Peay* (Kingsport, 1929), 361.
3. Oswald Eugene Brown, James Hampton Kirkland, and Edwin Mims, *God and the New Knowledge* (Nashville, 1926), 4.
4. *Ibid.*, 10.
5. *Ibid.*, 18.
6. Kenneth K. Bailey, "The Enactment of Tennessee's Antievolution Law," *Journal of Southern History*, XVI (November, 1950), 472-90. Donald Davidson, *The Tennessee, II, The New River: Civil War to TVA* (New York, 1948), 198.
7. *Ibid.*, 199.
8. *World's Most Famous Court Trial* (Cincinnati, 1925), 5. This is a transcript of the stenographic report of the trial.
9. Alexander, *Austin Peay*, xxxi.
10. Davidson, *The Tennessee, II*, 200.
11. *Ibid.*, 203.
12. *The Commercial Appeal*, April 9, 1924.
13. *Ibid.*, May 19, 1951.
14. *Ibid.*, May 20, 1951.
15. *Ibid.*, May 27, 1951.
16. *The Press Scimitar*, May 23, 1953.
17. *The Memphis Telephone Directory for December, 1959*, Classified Section.
18. *The World Almanac for 1960* (New York, 1960), 711.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### *The Volunteer State Goes to War, 1917-1918*

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JOHN SEVIER LED his intrepid band of Wataugans through the mountains to meet and defeat the British at King's Mountain and created a proud tradition for the people of the future state of Tennessee. Many sons of the Wataugans, now become Tennesseans, followed Andrew Jackson to New Orleans to defeat the British on January 8, 1815. Old Hickory's followers sent their sons to Mexico to fight for new territory at the behest of James K. Polk in 1846. A number of the men who went to Mexico joined their sons to meet on opposing sides at Shiloh, Franklin, and Lookout Mountain, for by 1861 the people of Tennessee were steeped in a tradition of fighting and were eager to fight for the side of their choice in the Civil War. A new generation of Tennesseans, interspersed with an occasional veteran of the Civil War, marched off to fight Spain in Cuba and in the Philippines in 1898.

Small wonder then, it was, that in the crucial years of 1917-18 nearly 100,000 Tennesseans either volunteered or were willingly drafted for duty in the armed forces.<sup>1</sup> These men were following a tradition that had been given to them at King's Mountain, New Orleans, and Shiloh.

The people of Tennessee had observed a fair degree of neutrality as Europe plunged into war in August, 1914. They watched with horror the loss of 128 American lives in the sinking of the British liner *Lusitania*, but from that time on their sympathies were predominantly on the side of the British and French. A number of eager young men from the state went to Canada and joined the British forces, while others thought that President Wilson was too lenient in his attitude toward Germany but applauded his efforts to maintain American neutrality. The Nashville *Banner* proclaimed in its headlines of February 3, 1917, that the United States was on the verge of war as a consequence of the severance of diplomatic relations with Germany.<sup>2</sup> The general assembly was in session and the senate adopted a resolution expressing confidence in President Wilson and supporting his policies.<sup>3</sup> H. M. Chandler, representative from McMinn County, was quoted in the February 9, 1917 issue of the *Banner* to the effect that the men of his county were so anxious to volunteer that a regiment could be raised within a fortnight.<sup>4</sup> Not all Tennesseans, however, were convinced that war was inevitable. John H. DeWitt, prominent Tennessee historian, announced that a peace



(Courtesy Johnson City Chamber of Commerce)

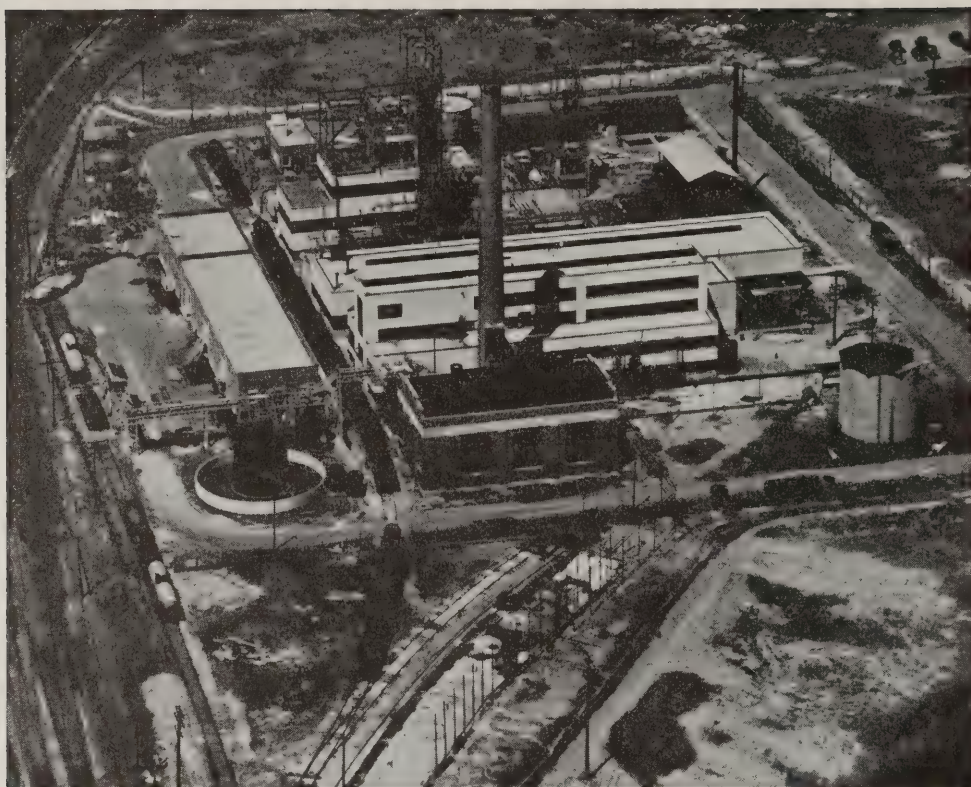
*Johnson City—U. S. Veterans Administration (Mountain Home)*



meeting would be held in Nashville on February 18, 1917. G. N. Tillman, one-time gubernatorial candidate, Colonel Jonas T. McAmis, prominent Nashville citizen, and Thomas H. Kittrell were among the civic leaders associated with the historian in this meeting. Although the meeting was for the purpose of urging the maintenance of peace, it adopted resolutions endorsing the policies of President Wilson and declared that Tennessee was ready for war if necessary.<sup>5</sup> Students of the University of Tennessee, at a chapel exercise on March 28, 1917, declared themselves willing to go to war.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, units of the Tennessee National Guard had arrived in the state after service in Mexico. These units were not at full strength, and on March 31, 1917, Colonel Cary F. Spence, commanding the Third Regiment, ordered active recruiting to bring that regiment to war strength. Colonel Harry S. Berry, commanding the First Tennessee, issued similar orders. The *Banner* announced that the state was on a war footing and ready for any eventuality.<sup>7</sup>

Public sentiment in Tennessee, in the main, developed along the same lines that sentiment in the nation followed. The Tennessee congressional delegation was following the lead of President Wilson, who struggled patiently to keep the United States out of war. Senator John K. Shields had not yet reached the parting of the ways with the chief executive. However, it was evident when Germany announced her intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare effective February 1, 1917, that few Tennesseans expected the United States to remain neutral indefinitely. The only alternative would have been to withdraw all American ships from the high seas, and such action was not seriously contemplated by the American people. The *City of Memphis* was one of three American-owned and operated ships sunk by German submarines on March 16-17, 1917. Citizens of Tennessee waited expectantly for the next scene in the unfolding drama. President Wilson called Congress into special session and "urged it to accept the state of war which the action of Germany had thrust upon the United States."<sup>8</sup> With all members of the Tennessee delegation supporting the President's request, the Congress on April 6, 1917, declared a state of war to be in existence between the United States and Germany.

The Nashville *Banner* editorially expected that Tennessee will faithfully live up to the name of Volunteer State, while its news columns announced that army and navy recruiting stations were busy.<sup>9</sup> The *Commercial Appeal* joined with other newspapers of the state in calling for a complete war effort.<sup>10</sup> A wave of patriotism swept through the state. Recruiting stations in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Memphis were busy as young men sought to enlist. Lebeck Brothers, a leading Nashville business establishment, announced that it would pay half salary to the families of employees enlisting in the armed services.<sup>11</sup> It was also evident that Tennesseans were conscious of the possibility of enemy sabotage for the *Banner* reported on April 9, 1917, that government and city police authorities were busy tracing rumors of plots in the city.<sup>12</sup>



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Memphis—Heyden Chemical Corporation Plant*

Democratic countries usually have war thrust upon them and are rarely prepared for the eventuality. Such was the predicament of the United States in 1917. The nation was confronted with the herculean task of mobilizing, equipping, training, and transporting an army overseas. This necessitated the building of a greater merchant fleet, the building of a large naval fleet, the recruitment of an army and navy, and the creation of an air force. The mobilization and training of such forces involved the building of army camps, naval bases, and flying fields. A well armed and well equipped military force made vital the erection of new industrial plants, the construction of munition plants, and the establishment of supply depots. Never before was the nation allowed so little time in which to do so much, for the British and French were reeling under the sledge hammer blows of the Germans.

It was almost total mobilization for the American people. Thousands of young men from the state volunteered for duty in the armed forces while other thousands went to work in industrial plants and munition factories. The war



effort in Tennessee was a part of the unified national program. Women and children manned the fields to produce food for the growing number of men in the armed forces. Unfortunately the word "slacker" came into use and was frequently applied to patriotic citizens who were making every effort to assist in winning the war. Many people of German origin were viewed with suspicion by their former friends. A Somerville jeweler of German birth, a leader in church and civic affairs of his community, suffered repeated damage to his place of business for no apparent reason other than the fact that he was a native of Germany. The residents of Germantown, a Shelby County community, changed its name to Neshoba, its early Indian designation. The German language, as a subject of study, was dropped from the course in several Tennessee colleges. These incidents, however, were deviations from the pattern of behavior of most citizens of the state. The people of Tennessee responded to the war effort with enthusiasm: they paid increased taxes without audible complaint, over-subscribed Liberty Loan drives, worked for the Red Cross, and cheerfully accepted meatless, wheatless, and heatless days—in brief, responded to every call from the national government with a hearty degree of participation.

A plant for the manufacture of powder was erected at a cost of \$80,000,000 on the Cumberland River near Nashville and was operated by the E. I. Du Pont de Nemours Company.<sup>13</sup> Thousands of Tennesseans worked in the building of this plant or in it after it was finished and placed in operation. This, perhaps, was the most important war plant located in the state.

The army established Park Field, near Millington, for the training of aviators. Hundreds of young men won their wings at this field.

*Civilian Organization*—Civilians, in the modern concept of war, are heavily involved in duties designed to keep the armed forces properly supplied, in activities devised to keep the civilian morale at a high level, and in implementing the policies of the national government. The federal government created a National Council of Defense and requested the governor of each state to organize such a council on the state level. Rutledge Smith, of Cookeville, was appointed by Governor Rye to the chairmanship of the Tennessee Council of Defense. Smith was an excellent choice for this post as he was widely known in the state and as he was possessed of great energy and enthusiasm. Chairman Smith, in cooperation with Governor Rye, soon perfected an excellent organization. This council was to coordinate all war related activities in the state and prepare the people to meet any emergency that might come to pass. W. E. Myer, of Smith County, became chairman of the Fuel Administration Department, Lee Brock, of Nashville, was appointed chairman of the Fair Price Committee, and Percy Maddin, of Nashville, was named chairman of the Legal Advisory Board. These men, in cooperation with local officials and private citizens, organized similar

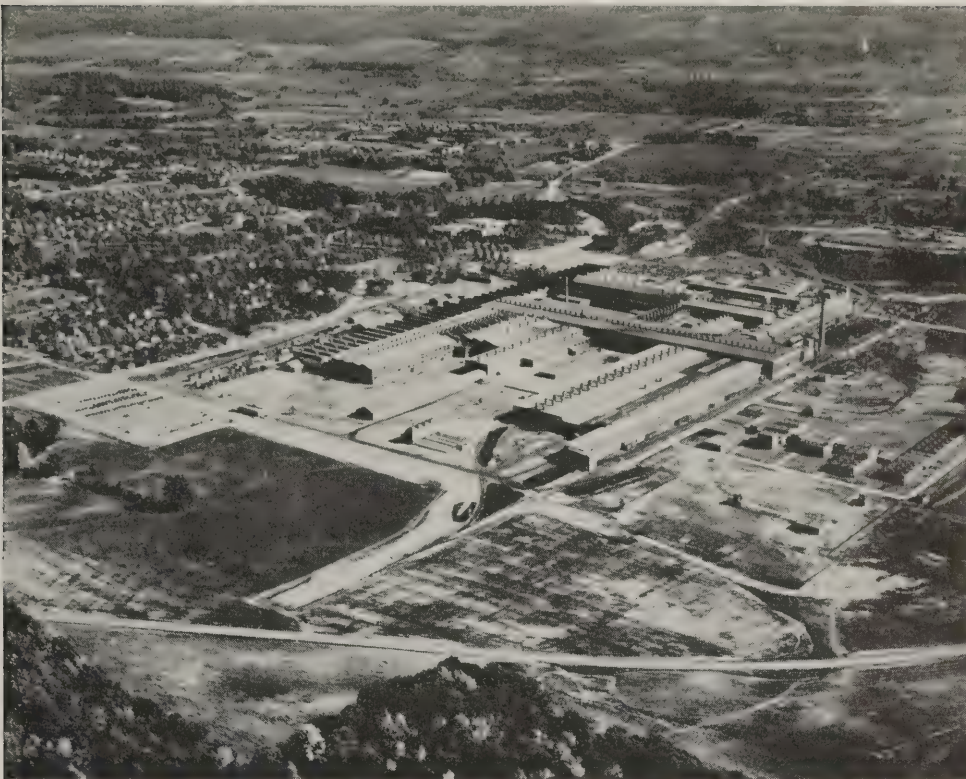


committees in virtually every county of the state. With such an organization Tennessee was ready for almost any contingency.

A possible food shortage early became a matter of concern in Tennessee. Mayor Robert Ewing, of Nashville, asked that all vacant ground in the city be planted in food gardens.<sup>14</sup> Then, on April 18, 1917, H. Knox Bryson, State Commissioner of Agriculture, called on the farmers to produce more food crops, and P. L. Harned, Chairman of the State Board of Education, requested local school officials to free high school students as much as possible to raise food gardens.<sup>15</sup> The mayors of Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Memphis followed the example set by Ewing.

The most significant development in the Tennessee effort to conserve food was the appointment of Dr. Harcourt A. Morgan, dean of the College of Agriculture of the University of Tennessee, as director of the Tennessee Food Administration. Morgan was the personal choice of Herbert Hoover, Federal Food Administrator, for this post. He soon perfected an efficient state organization around the county agricultural agents. Sugar and flour were the most needed foods for the armed forces. Morgan was able to avoid compulsory rationing of these items in Tennessee. He succeeded in having these scarce items rationed on a voluntary basis.<sup>16</sup> Authorities are agreed that Morgan made the state a highly capable administrator in a most difficult task.

*Military Preparations*—Several regiments of the Tennessee National Guard had been on active duty along the Mexican border for five months when the United States became involved in World War I. These troops returned to Tennessee well trained and disciplined, but hardly at combat strength. Many recruits had been added, but not trained, when the regiments were mustered into federal service in April, 1917. The First and Third Tennessee regiments were called into federal service on April 13, 1917, and went into camp at Belle Meade on the outskirts of Nashville. Later these units were ordered to Camp Sevier at Greenville, South Carolina. The First Tennessee Ambulance Company, recruited to full strength and well equipped, left Memphis on June 7, 1917, for Fort Oglethorpe to become the first medical unit from the Volunteer State to go on active duty. It was soon joined by the First Tennessee Field Hospital Unit which had entrained at Knoxville. These units were then removed to Camp Sevier where they were welcomed by the First Tennessee Infantry Regiment which had been mobilized in Nashville. September found the remaining Tennessee National Guard units joining their compatriots at Camp Sevier. The late arrivals included the newly formed First Regiment of Field Artillery under the command of Colonel Luke Lea, former United States Senator, and the Second Tennessee Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel James H. Gleason, commanding. A total of 7,065 guardsmen were mustered into federal service from Tennessee. These units were not permitted to retain their separate identi-



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Alcoa—Aluminum Company of America Plant*

ties but were consolidated with National Guard units from North Carolina and South Carolina into the Thirtieth Division, which was called Old Hickory in honor of Andrew Jackson. The First Tennessee Ambulance Company became a part of the Forty-Second Division and the Infantry Company G, Negro, was made a part of the Ninety-Third Division.

The orderly induction of men into the armed forces was a major problem to the United States in World War I. It was apparent that there would be a considerable number of volunteers, but this method of raising an army and navy would not provide men as they were needed and would not distribute the obligation equitably among all of the people. Hence, President Wilson recommended a Selective Service Act to the Congress which enacted this law on May 18, 1917. The Tennessee delegation in Congress was sharply divided on this question with Senator Kenneth McKellar stoutly fighting for a volunteer army and navy. This law provided that men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty, inclusive, should register with local draft boards and should be

called by lot for induction into the armed forces. The following year Congress amended the law to make it include all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, inclusive. Governor Rye immediately appointed Major Rutledge Smith, who had so ably headed the Tennessee Council for Defense, to direct the selective service system in the state. Draft boards were appointed in every county of the state, and preparations were made to register all eligible men on June 5, 1917. Physicians, county and municipal officers, and prominent citizens became members of the selective service boards. Medical and legal advisory boards were established in all sections of the state and gave free medical and legal advice to registrants. The dentists of the state voluntarily formed a dental corps which gave free dental treatment to many men in order to prepare them for induction into the armed forces. Three registrations were held, on June 5, 1917, December 14, 1917, and August 24, 1918. Selective service was responsible for the induction of 61,069 young men of the state into the armed services. Of this number 43,730 were white and 17,339 were Negro. The selective service boards of the state were responsible for the registration of 472,716 men. These boards completed classification of 368,719 of these registrants.<sup>17</sup> Never before had the people of Tennessee so thoroughly and so completely responded to the call of duty.

*Tennesseans in Action*—Meanwhile, the Thirtieth Division, composed in good measure of Tennessee men, had arrived in France, where, after a period of intensive training, it relieved a British division on the Western front on August 17, 1918. The Fifty-Ninth Brigade, under the able command of General Lawrence D. Tyson, of Knoxville, covered itself with glory in almost continuous action until the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918. General Tyson was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his capable direction of his brigade in action. This notable brigade participated in the heavy fighting at the Canal Sector, at Ypres-Lys, on the Somme, and had a part in cracking the famous Hindenburg Line.

The 117th Infantry, Colonel Cary F. Spence commanding, was conspicuous for bravery and gallantry in action, with the commanding officer being cited by General Pershing for his heroic conduct under fire. The men of the famous 117th Regiment were no less courageous than their commanding officer, for 129 men received medals from General Pershing.

No less conspicuous was the Fifty-Fifth Brigade which had moved into the Toul sector of the front. This brigade, commanded by Colonel Luke Lea who had also commanded the 114th Field Artillery, had the honor of being especially cited for distinguished service at the front. The brigade saw action at St. Mihiel, in the Meuse-Argonne, and at Woevre.\*

\* A good discussion of this Brigade may be found in William J. Bacon (ed.), *History of the Fifty-Fifth Field Artillery Brigade*. (Memphis, 1920)



Other American units, composed in part of Tennesseans, which saw distinguished service on the front were the 114th Machine Gun Battalion, the Fifty-Ninth Depot Brigade, and the Second Corps Artillery.

Many Tennesseans served in the navy, the most notable individual being Admiral George Gleaves, who was in charge of transporting United States troops to Europe. The fact that almost 2,000,000 men were sent overseas offers adequate testimony to the efficiency of this officer, whose portrait adorns the Tennessee State Library.

The Marine Corps, the Army Air Corps, and many other branches of the service received large numbers of Tennesseans. The sons of the Volunteer State served with distinction in these fighting forces.

Alvin C. York, a farm boy from the Cumberland Mountain area, was destined to become Tennessee's most honored hero of the war. York had been assigned to the 328th Infantry, and in due course of time arrived on the front. It was in the fighting in the Argonne Forest that young York found his detachment decimated and himself separated from his remaining comrades. It was under these circumstances that the young mountaineer launched a one-man offensive against the German army. He is reported to have killed twenty German soldiers, captured a German major, and to have prevailed upon his prisoner to persuade 131 other enemy soldiers to surrender. In the process of this heroic exploit, he is credited with having put thirty-five enemy machine guns out of commission. He was promoted to sergeant and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the American Medal of Honor. Congress voted him a resolution of appreciation, and upon his return to his native land he was widely acclaimed as the greatest enlisted man of the war. The grateful people of Tennessee purchased and gave to him a farm in his native county of Fentress.

Perhaps, the most daring and imaginative incident involving American soldiers in France came just prior to Christmas, 1918. A small group of soldiers, led by the intrepid Colonel Luke Lea, conceived the idea of capturing the abdicated German Kaiser and presenting him to President Wilson as a Christmas present.<sup>18</sup> William II had found refuge in the neutral country of Holland. It was a violation of neutrality for armed American soldiers to go into Holland and attempt to capture a person who had been granted sanctuary in that country. This, however, did not seem to worry Lea and his little band of followers. They travelled by automobile across Belgium and reached the Castle of Amerongen where the Kaiser was living. They are reported to have caught sight of the former German monarch and to have heard his voice before they were halted and arrested by the Dutch guards. The incident involved such possible international complications that it became a carefully guarded secret for some months. The information was leaked to American newspapers, but Colonel Lea denied any knowledge of it as late as April 3, 1919.<sup>19</sup> The effort to capture the Kaiser has not been officially admitted by our government, but there seems



(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Memphis—Compress Company Plant*

little doubt that Lea and his daring band made such an effort. If the plan had succeeded the name of Luke Lea would have probably become a household word in the United States.

Many homes in Tennessee were saddened as reports of casualties filtered in through the War Department. More than 4,000 Tennesseans gave their lives in this great struggle, untold thousands of others were wounded, and many were confined in enemy prisons. There is no way of determining the loss to the state in future potential human resources, for war is ever expensive in that respect and the only compensation that the state has received for this uncounted loss is the continuance of a proud tradition—a tradition originating at King's Mountain.

Approximately 150 young men from Tennessee received either the Distinguished Service Medal or the American Medal of Honor. These citations came as a result of bravery, skill, and gallantry on the field of action. Numerous

others were cited in official reports or by their commanding officers. When the victorious regiments returned to the state, the people gave them wild acclaim. Parades were held in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, and Memphis, with a grateful people paying homage to their victorious fighting men.

With the war over, the people of Tennessee turned their attention again to political, economic, and cultural problems. The veterans of World War I were to assume positions of importance in these efforts. We shall see in other chapters how these veterans served the people of the state in civilian life.

#### CHAPTER XXXVIII—NOTES

1. George Townes Gaines, *Fighting Tennesseans* (Kingsport, 1931), 88.
2. Nashville *Banner*, February 3, 1917.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, February 9, 1917.
5. *Ibid.*, February 19, 1917.
6. *Ibid.*, March 28, 1917.
7. *Ibid.*, March 31, 1917.
8. *Ibid.*, April 6, 1917.
9. *Ibid.*, April 7, 1917.
10. Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, April 7, 1917.
11. Nashville *Banner*, April 9, 1917.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Moore and Foster, *Tennessee*, I, 639.
14. Nashville *Banner*, April 12, 1917.
15. *Ibid.*, April 18, 1917.
16. Harry L. Coles, "The Federal Food Administration of Tennessee and Its Records in the National Archives, 1917-1919," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (March, 1945), 23-57.
17. Hamer, *Tennessee*, II, 911.
18. An unsigned article in *The Literary Digest*, April 19, 1919, p. 64.
19. Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, April 3, 1919.





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CHAPTER XXXIX

*The Great Depression*

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“WE IN AMERICA are nearer to the final triumph over poverty than ever before in the history of any land. The poorhouse is vanishing from among us.”<sup>1</sup> This statement from the inaugural address of President Herbert Hoover was probably accepted as a good picture of the country and the state on the day that he made it by most of the citizens of Tennessee. Tennesseans, as most of the nation, had enjoyed the booming economy of the 1920's and they faced with confidence the future. A majority of the people of Tennessee had voted for Hoover in the election of 1928 and they appeared to have confidence in his sanguine predictions for the future. Many Tennesseans had participated in the inexplicable rituals of the modern Ku Klux Klan, bought whiskey from the bootleggers of the prohibition period, and observed “The Era of Flaming Youth.” These deviations from the normal pattern of behavior, however, did not alter the prevailing opinion that the state was in an unprecedented period of prosperity and that poverty was about to disappear from the land. The people appeared to have a strong conviction that industrial development would continue, that the agricultural yield would remain high, and that the products of the farm would continue to bring a reasonably good price. Such was the condition of the state on the eve of the greatest economic depression in the history of the state and nation.

*The Collapse of Good Times*—Prior to the stock market crash of October, 1929, business in the nation was declining. This was also true in Tennessee as farm prices were not as high as the farmers had expected and consumer purchases were reflecting the general downward trend of business. Nevertheless, the people of Tennessee seemed to think that the situation was temporary and that better conditions would prevail with the onset of Christmas shopping. This degree of optimism was shattered by the stock market crash which came on “Black Thursday,” October 24, 1929. Thirteen million shares were traded on the New York Stock Exchange on that gloomy day.<sup>2</sup> The Tuesday following was an even more depressing day to the nation's economy, for sixteen million shares were sold as traditionally high priced stocks hit the price toboggan. Tennessee, with her sister states, was entering a period of economic distress that would not be completely relieved until the outbreak of war in Europe.

Many Tennesseans were slow to believe that the state and nation was in the throes of a depression, for they appeared to share the opinion of President Hoover who said, "We have now passed the worst."<sup>3</sup> There was some reason for this optimism, for as the crop planting season approached the farmers of the state commenced preparing their land for the planting of the usual acreages of cotton and corn. The planting season brought a temporary, if mild, expansion of business to the merchants.

A prolonged drouth, however, brought misery to the farmers of the state and adversely affected all business in the state. Thousands of acres of corn failed to yield a normal crop because of lack of rain. Pasture lands were seared to a crisp and cattle became poor as they should have been fattening on an abundance of grass. Hay fields that in previous years had made a good crop, yielded little. Many farmers in West Tennessee became discouraged, abandoned their crops, and went to the cities to seek work. However, few of them realized their hopes of finding employment in an industrial plant as these establishments were feeling the effects of a depression that had become nationwide in its scope. The state was in the grip of a depression that had been aggravated by drouth and crop failure. The purchasing power of the farmer had been reduced drastically and the merchants were soon to feel the effects. A total of 245 business firms in the state were to close their doors in 1930.<sup>4</sup> The Christmas season of that year brought little hope to the people of Tennessee for a business revival. By late winter of 1931 breadlines were forming outside the hospital kitchens in Memphis, as hundreds of destitute people lined up in the hope that the hospitals would have a surplus of food and share it with them.<sup>5</sup>

President Hoover held the conservative view that relief was a purely local responsibility. He had appointed an Emergency Committee on Unemployment Relief under the leadership of Colonel Arthur Woods but had made no funds available to this group.<sup>6</sup> Colonel Woods asked the President for a wide public works program including slum clearance, federal housing projects, and federal aid for rural electrification. President Hoover rejected these requests. He further incensed the people of Tennessee by his veto of an act providing for the development of the potential power facilities at Muscle Shoals. The Hoover idea that relief was a local responsibility was proving inadequate to the emergency. The burden on private and local relief agencies was more than they could bear. The lines of men gathering each day for food at kitchen doors and welfare agencies were increasing in length. Meanwhile, people who had been fortunate enough to accumulate savings were being forced to expend them for day to day living expenses and many people were losing their savings in bank failures.

It was the worker in Tennessee—blue-collar and white-collar alike—who shared much of the brunt of the depression. Long lines of men formed at em-





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Elizabethton—Bemberg Rayon Plant*

ployment agencies in search for any kind of work. Thousands of others made the daily rounds of industrial plants in the vain hope that they might find even temporary employment. The national government was holding fast to the idea that conditions would improve soon or that the unfortunate would be cared for by local agencies. The hope was a vain one.

*The Plight of the Farmers*—The Federal Farm Board launched a program of attempting to raise the prices of farm products by asking the farmer to grow less. This program, which was voluntary on the part of the farmers, failed to impress the individualistic Tennessee farmer. He responded in 1931 by joining in the South-wide trend of growing more cotton. They produced more cotton than they had in years and this commodity dropped in price to five cents a pound, the price of a spool of thread. As a result the West Tennessee farmer had more cotton and less money, the merchant had an inventory which he could not sell, the physician had patients who could not pay, the banks had more withdrawals than deposits, and consumers could not buy the abundance of cotton goods that were available to them. A land of plenty had become a land of want. Never before was the consumer confronted with such an abundance with so little to purchase it.

Farm credit became almost impossible to obtain, foreclosures became frequent, and many Tennessee farmers were forced to apply for relief. The Red

Cross did heroic work in distributing commodities to the farmer. This, however, was not of sufficient scope to relieve the plight of a people who were selling corn for fifty cents per bushel and cotton for five cents per pound. Net farm income in Tennessee had dropped by two-thirds from 1929 to 1932.<sup>7</sup> The once proud Tennessee farmer was forced to go on relief. A people who for generations had lived a life of rugged self-sufficiency were forced to ask for aid from private as well as government agencies. A crash in the stock market, a prolonged drouth, and declining prices for farm products had plunged the people of the state from the heights of prosperity into the chasm of poverty. From Bristol to Memphis the people began to develop a sense of doubt and frustration. For the first time since the dark days of defeat in the Civil War, virtually complete gloom settled over the proud Volunteer State.

*The Plight of Business*—The depressed economy of the farmers made itself felt among the business establishments of the state. Industries added to the growing numbers of unemployed by laying off scores of workers or by ceasing production for several months of the year. These periods of no production had a tendency to become lengthy. Merchants reduced the number of sales people employed in their stores and sometimes lengthened the working hours of their remaining employees without a corresponding increase in pay. Some banks were forced to place restrictions upon the percentage of deposits that could be withdrawn in a period of time.<sup>8</sup> A number of business firms failed, and in 1931 a total of 353 Tennessee business establishments closed their doors.<sup>9</sup> The year of 1932 brought about no improvement in this regard for a total of 578 firms failed in that dark year of the depression. It was not until the drastic measures of the New Deal had become effective that there was any appreciable decline in the number of business failures in the state. The number of failures dropped to 133 in 1934 and appeared to level off in 1939 when only 114 Tennessee firms were forced to suspend operations.<sup>10</sup>

Many industries that had in the glowing days of 1929 announced plans for future expansion were forced to cancel plans for increasing their plant's productive capacity. Long established plants such as the Fisher Body Company in Memphis, engaged in making wooden parts for automobile bodies, closed their doors, throwing some 1,200 men out of work. The Ford Motor Company suspended operations in its Memphis assembly plant for a good part of each year. The workers in such plants were forced to seek other places of employment or to join the relief lines.

*Depression Politics*—President Hoover had refused to accept the idea that the federal government should go into the business of providing relief. He had agreed to the expansion of federal public works and to the expansion of the lending power of the federal Farm Loan Banks. The sorely pressed chief

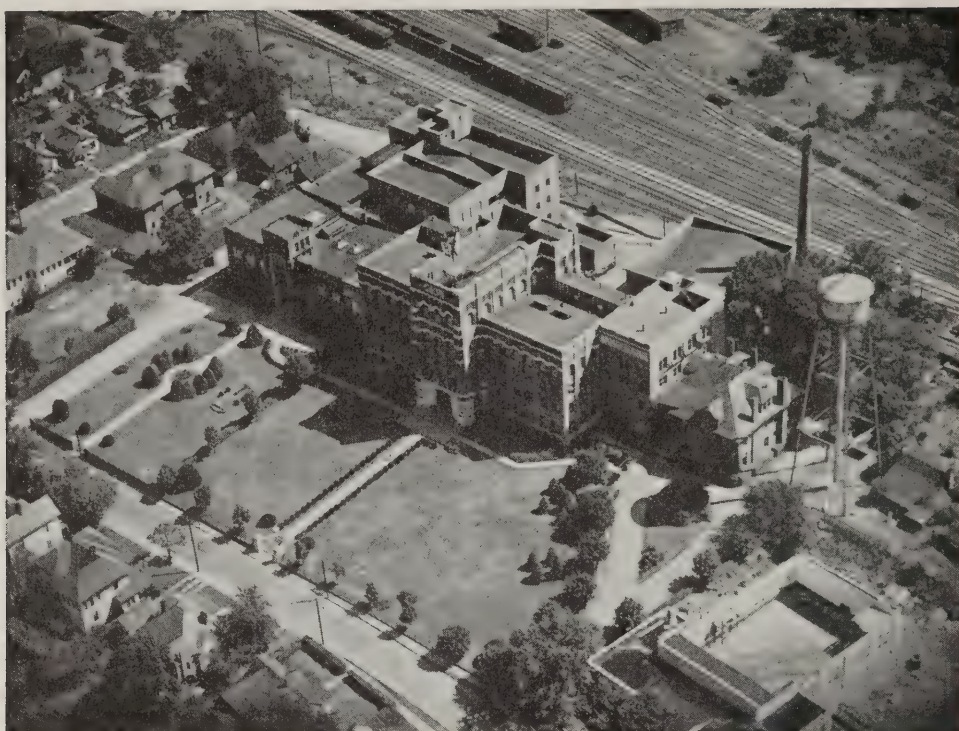
executive, in January 1932, recommended to the Congress the chartering of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. This great corporation opened thirty offices over the country and went into the business of lending money to banks, railroads, and insurance companies. Tennessee received its full share of benefit from the activities of this organization and in August, 1932, there was a slight business rally in the state. The President was unwilling to go beyond these measures in restoring the economy of the country or in alleviating the suffering of the masses of the people. Hoover denied that the depression could be cured by federal legislation.

Meanwhile, the suffering people of the nation were losing patience with a government that did not come to their aid and with a leader who advised all to laugh or sing without giving them anything to laugh and sing about. It was probably inevitable that the people should vent their ill temper on any public officeholder who was facing reelection in November, 1932. President Hoover had not been the architect of the depression but he was to bear the brunt of a bitter and despairing people. The citizens of Tennessee were no less bitter toward the pathetic and disconsolate President than were the people of many other states. Tennessee returned a resounding majority for Franklin D. Roosevelt in the presidential election of 1932. They believed that a change of administration could not worsen their plight and they hoped that such a change would result in improved conditions.

*Education and the Depression*—Henry Horton had been reelected governor of Tennessee in November, 1930. Four days later the Bank of Tennessee in Nashville was in the hands of a receiver. This unhappy event was followed in rapid succession by the closing of the Holston Union National Bank in Knoxville and Caldwell and Company in Nashville. The funds of the state of Tennessee were, in the main, deposited in these institutions. It was inevitable that in time the educational institutions of the state would suffer from these losses. Even though the finances of the state were in bad condition in 1931 and the people were suffering from economic distress the legislature of that year maintained the appropriations for elementary and secondary schools as well as for the institutions of higher learning.<sup>11</sup>

Before the end of the biennium for which the 1931 appropriation had been made, the state was in arrears in paying its obligations to the counties and cities. Institutions of higher learning were not receiving their appropriations from the state, and several of them were faced with the necessity of advising their instructional staffs that they would have to teach on faith or work out an arrangement with the banks for advancing a portion of their salaries each month. When the legislature of 1933 convened, the state faced a current deficit in educational funds of \$10,000,000. This situation existed, in part, because the budget of the state had not been in balance for the past six years,





(Courtesy Bristol Chamber of Commerce)

*Bristol—S. E. Massengill Company Plant*

because of the loss of funds due to bank failures, and because the revenues of the state were declining as a result of the depression. The condition was further aggravated because local units of government were unable to collect taxes. For the year 1932-1933 county and municipal property taxes were more than fifty per cent delinquent. Not since the Civil War had the public schools of the state been in such dire financial straits.

Hill McAlister, a veteran of several years in the office of state treasurer, had been elected governor on a pledge of strict economy and a balanced budget. The majority of the members of the general assembly had been elected on similar platforms. The new administration was confronted with the problem of selling a sufficient quantity of state bonds to pay the obligations to the public schools and to the institutions of higher learning as well as balancing the budget for the next biennium. This task was made more difficult because of the fact that the indebtedness of the state was at an unprecedented high. This debt amounted to \$89,000,000 in addition to \$29,800,000 worth of county highway bonds which the previous state administration had agreed to assume.

The task of selling bonds of the state of Tennessee was complicated by the fact that the state budget had been chronically out of balance and because the state was having difficulty in meeting interest payments on its already staggering debt. Throughout the early part of 1933 the sorely pressed governor attempted to find purchasers for the newly authorized bonds. The year was approximately half gone before a syndicate of state banks agreed to purchase the bonds and the teachers were paid.

County boards of education had issued warrants to the teachers for their monthly salaries. The counties did not have the funds with which to redeem these warrants. Many teachers were reduced to the extremity of discounting warrants to banks and individuals at a rate of discount which in some counties reached thirty per cent.<sup>12</sup> Many teachers suffered the loss of homes, insurance policies, and automobiles for which they had obligated themselves, in the belief that their salaries would be paid in cash when due. The morale of Tennessee school teachers reached a new low in these troubled days.

Perhaps, more serious than the loss of morale among the teachers was the shortening of the school term in many counties of the state. The average term for county elementary schools of the state had been 153 days prior to the debacle of 1932. Some counties ran out of cash and thought it unwise to issue warrants for the continued operation of schools, thereby shortening the length of the school term to as little as fifty days. Many children were attending these abbreviated sessions without books and without satisfactory lunches. The public schools of the state were in the same desperate plight as the farmers and industrial workers were suffering in the year of 1932. Teachers' salaries had been decreased by ten per cent since 1929.<sup>13</sup>

Governor McAlister and the members of the legislature, in January, 1933, faced the problem of reducing expenditures so as to balance the budget of the state and restore the confidence of people in the credit of the state. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary to reduce appropriations drastically.<sup>14</sup>

Public education was not the only function of the state to suffer from decreased appropriations. Every department of state government was forced to launch an austerity program. Budgets for every institution were examined and reduced, the state temporarily abandoned the policy of issuing bonds for highway construction and confined its activities to maintenance, and salaries of the great majority of state employees were reduced. The processes of recovery in state government were slow and it was four years before a new governor and a new legislature deemed it wise to increase materially appropriations for the functions of government.

*Tennessee Emerges from the Depression*—The people of the state indulged in their share of complaining during the years of depression. They found fault with the national administration of Herbert Hoover. A few citizens of the state joined the ill-fated Bonus March of 1932. The constant cry of why





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Nashville—Nashville Bridge Company Plant*

does not the government do something could be heard in Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis, Dyersburg, Bristol, and Columbia. It was echoed on the farms and in the hamlets of the state. Nevertheless, there was never the fear of revolution or violence that seemed to exist in some of the great industrial centers of other sections of the country. The farmers of Tennessee never interfered with the forced sale of their lands. On the state level, many people protested bitterly over the loss of state funds in bank failures and wreaked their vengeance on the responsible administration at the polls in November, 1932. Many had applauded an attempt by the legislature of 1931 to impeach a governor who was probably honest but weak.

In the final analysis they accepted want and poverty with something of the same spirit that had characterized their ancestors in pioneer days. These descendants of pioneer stock developed a spirit of comradeship, helping each other, and sharing common hardships. Want and misery may have been reflected in the faces of the men who stood on the street corners of Memphis,



Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville selling apples as the Christmas season of 1932 approached, but there was also the conviction that better days would come. A less hardy people could not have survived the austerity of those dark winter days.

The Tennessean's verdict as to the terminal point of the depression will probably be determined by his political convictions. The Republican and the conservative Democrat will maintain that the depression did not end until the United States became involved in World War II. The Democrat is convinced that the New Deal policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt resulted in the end of the depression. Both will agree that it was bad while it lasted and that they never want to see another like it.

## CHAPTER XXXIX—NOTES

1. Quoted in Walter Johnson, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue: Presidents and the People, 1929-1959* (Boston, 1960), 6.
2. *Ibid.*, 10.
3. Quoted in *ibid.*, 11, from the *Literary Digest*, May 25, 1930.
4. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1930 (Washington, 1930), 11.
5. *The Commercial Appeal*, February 9, 1931.
6. Dumas Malone and Basil Rauch, *Empire for Liberty: The Genesis and Growth of the United States of America* (New York, 1960), II, 537.
7. *Ibid.*, 540.
8. *The Fayette Falcon*, August 15, 1931. A weekly newspaper published at Somerville.
9. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1931 (Washington, 1931), 11.
10. *Ibid.*, 1939, p. 12.
11. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 376.
12. This was the rate of discount in Fayette, Crockett, and Hardeman counties. Interviews with the school superintendents in these counties and statements in the possession of the author.
13. Holt, *Public Schools in Tennessee*, 390.
14. *Ibid.*, 393.



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## CHAPTER XL

### *A New Era in Tennessee: TVA*

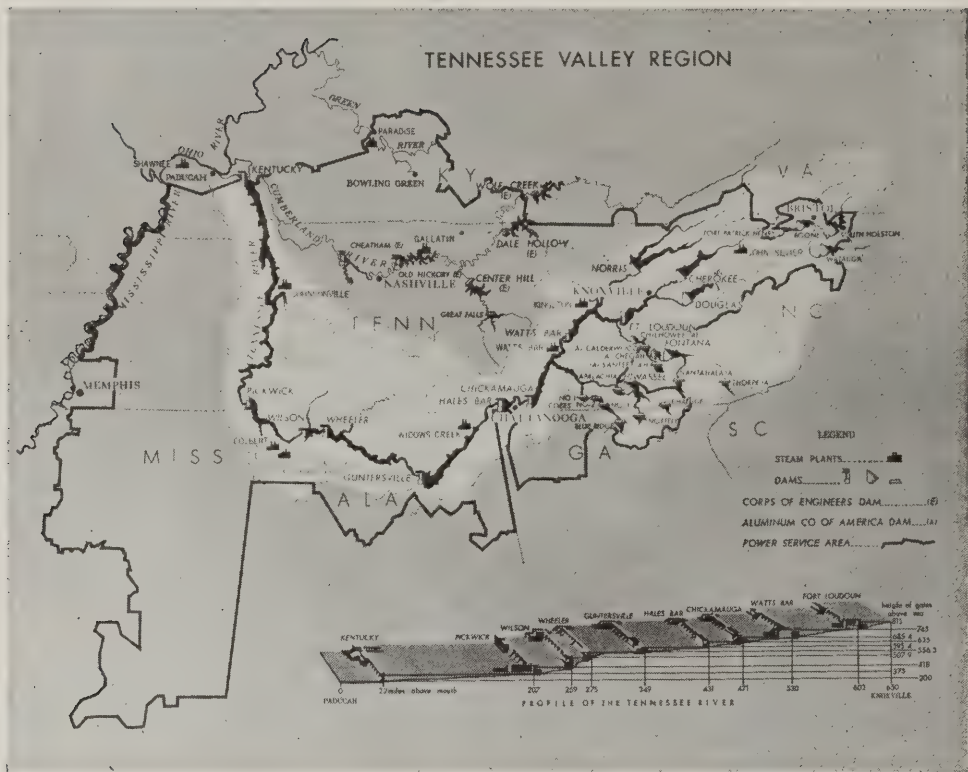
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THE BASIN OF the Tennessee River originates in southwestern Virginia and ends with the confluence of the Tennessee and Ohio rivers. In flowing from its point of origin to its end the river proper touches five states—Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky, while the streams that form its source come from Virginia and North Carolina. Therefore, it may be said that the basin of the Tennessee touches the soil of seven states and effects the lives of the people of these states. The valley of this great unpredictable river covers 201 counties and measures some 92,000 square miles in area, or roughly three per cent of the nation's area.

*The Valley Before the Coming of the Tennessee Valley Authority*—Nearly three decades ago the valley was an underdeveloped area, containing a low level of agricultural and industrial development. There was beauty of landscape in the rugged mountains of Tennessee, but the soil was thin and the area was not realizing its potential in development. The people were poor—many of them subsisting on a cash income of less than \$100 a year.<sup>1</sup> In a number of the counties 50 per cent of the families were on relief, and in one county 87 per cent of all families were receiving relief payments from the government. In spite of adversity, most of the people were ready to accept a new leadership and take up the march to better times. Their opportunity was to come under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The one island of hope in the sprawling valley had been the Wilson Dam at Muscle Shoals. This dam had been built by the government under the authority of the National Defense Act of 1916. This bill had authorized the construction of dams and powerhouses for the operation of nitrate plants. Wilson Dam was built and the war ended, leaving an idle giant in the shoals of the great river. A courageous group of Southern congressmen agitated for the use of Wilson Dam to guarantee to farmers an abundant source of cheap fertilizer. Senator George Norris, of Nebraska, had his misgivings about the ability of the installation to produce cheap fertilizer and conceived of it as a producer of electric power. The fight over the disposition of this idle potential giant of industry was in full swing. Business men were willing to assume





(Courtesy of the TVA)

*Map Showing the Tennessee Valley Drainage Area in White; the Power Service Area Heavily Outlined.*

operation if the government would offer generous terms. Senator Norris became the champion of Muscle Shoals, subordinating the cry for cheap fertilizer to a more appealing campaign for cheap electricity. The Nebraska statesman, beginning in 1921, introduced into the Congress a series of bills providing for government operation of hydroelectric plants on the Tennessee River.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, Henry Ford electrified the people of the Valley with a proposal to take over the operation of Wilson Dam, and reportedly would have built a great city at that site. Other business groups came forward with proposals to buy the dam. The Nebraska liberal, however, resisted all efforts to deliver the dam into the hands of private interests. He felt that such groups would establish monopolies in the field of electric power and that the true use of the facility was government operation, with the rates charged by the government to serve as a measuring rod for the fairness of rates charged by privately operated power companies. Norris steered his bill through Congress in 1928 only to have it meet with a veto by President Coolidge. Again in 1931 the

unrelenting Nebraskan guided his bill through the Congress only to have Herbert Hoover deliver a ringing veto message as he refused his approval. The prolonged fight of Norris served to keep the facility out of private hands and preserve it for later government use.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Tennessee Valley Authority*—With the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt a new era dawned for the people of the great valley of the winding Tennessee River. The new President envisioned a plan in scope far greater than the persistent Nebraskan had ever contemplated.

The new President was soon in communication with Senator Norris on the subject of Wilson Dam and the entire Tennessee River Valley.<sup>3</sup> President Roosevelt, in a dramatic address to Congress on April 10, 1933, projected the future development of the Tennessee Basin to an extent not hitherto expressed by the most ardent advocates of the potentialities of the Valley. He envisioned power development, flood control, soil conservation, reforestation, a diversified industry, and retirement of poor farm land. To direct this development Roosevelt requested the Congress to enact legislation creating an organization that would have the power of government but would operate on many of the principles of private enterprise.<sup>4</sup> This body, having the title Tennessee Valley Authority, would have the task of planning the development of the Valley for the good of the nation. The Roosevelt proposal touched off a wave of reaction both for and against the bill. The *New York Times* declared that the enactment of such legislation would mark the low of congressional folly.<sup>5</sup> Congressmen from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama hastened to endorse the proposal.<sup>6</sup> Wendell Willkie, president of Commonwealth and Southern, led a long list of utility executives who were to testify against the creation of the Authority before the House Military Affairs Committee. Representative Joe Martin of Massachusetts led the Republican fight against the bill with the declaration that the TVA was patterned after one of the Russian schemes.<sup>7</sup> Martin was joined in the fight against the TVA by other Republican stalwarts in the House of Representatives. The bill had been introduced in this body by Representative Lister Hill who received strong support from the Tennessee delegation. Nevertheless, the bill was amended so as to limit the government's power to build dams and erect transmission lines. It was a different story in the upper chamber. Kenneth McKellar, senior Senator from Tennessee, ably abetted the Nebraskan in bringing the bill to passage without crippling amendments. The legislation went to conference and Roosevelt intervened in behalf of the Senate bill prevailing on the House to accept the Norris version. The TVA Act was signed by the President on May 18, 1933. A new era had dawned for the people of the great valley of the Tennessee River.

*Scope of the Tennessee Valley Authority*—Arthur E. Morgan, the first chairman of the three-man board created to administer the Tennessee Valley Author-



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Norris Dam, the first constructed by the TVA*

ity, has probably best defined the scope of the new facility in the statement, "the improvement of that total well being, in physical, social, and economic condition, is the total aim."<sup>8</sup> This quotation from Dr. Morgan embraces the threefold purpose of the authority as contained in the act. The implementation of these broad objectives necessitated the development of the river, the construction of dams and other projects, the promotion of navigation of the river and its tributaries, the maintenance of flood control, the improvement of the soil through the manufacture and sale of fertilizer and sound conservation practices, and the generating and sale of electric power. Broad powers were given the board in developing these functions.<sup>9</sup> The law designed the TVA as a government corporation with the power and elasticity to accomplish its great aims.

*The Three-Man Board*—President Roosevelt appointed to the chairmanship of the board Arthur E. Morgan, designer of the Miami Conservancy District and since 1920 president of Antioch College in Ohio. Chairman Morgan was an engineer of outstanding ability, a thoroughly honest individual, and a social



thinker with Utopian ideals. Morgan was fifty-five years of age and had devoted the greater portion of his adult life to the improvement of society. His years of experience had whetted his appetite for remaking the world.

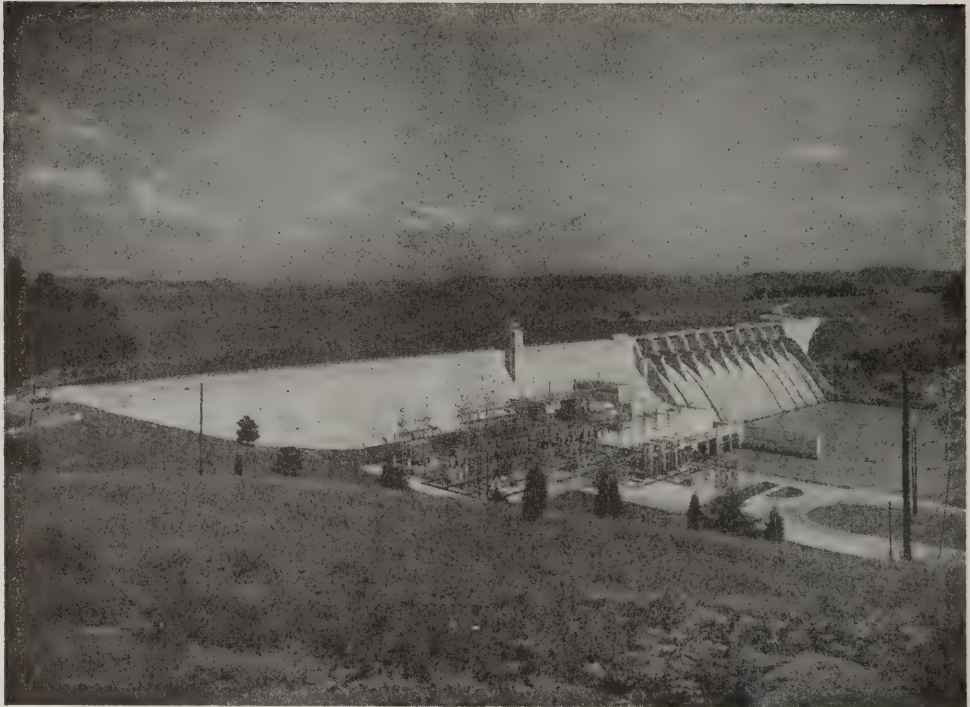
Harcourt A. Morgan, for fourteen years president of the University of Tennessee, a sixty-six year old agriculturist with a rich understanding of the Valley and its people, was the second member of the three-man board. This Tennessean had the almost solid support of the people of the area.

David Lilienthal, thirty-four year old native of Indiana, a graduate of De Pauw University and of Harvard Law School, a protégé of Felix Frankfurter, Donald Richberg, and Philip La Follette, was named as the other member of the triumvirate that was destined to launch the TVA.

Specific areas of responsibility were given to each of the three members, with Harcourt A. Morgan in charge of fertilizer production and agricultural policy; Arthur E. Morgan responsible for dam construction, education, rural living, and social and economic planning; and David Lilienthal supervising power policy. This division of responsibility was not to prevent conflicts among the members of the governing board.

*Dams Constructed by the Authority*—Wilson Dam may well be considered the parent dam of the great series of dams that were destined to be constructed in the Valley. It was to be followed by twenty other dams before the end of 1951. In the order of their construction they are as follows: Norris, Wheeler, Pickwick, Hiwassee, Guntersville, Chickamauga, Kentucky, Watts Bar, Fort Loudoun, Cherokee, Douglas, Fontana, Chatuge, Nottely, Ocoee No. 3, Appalachia, Watauga, South Holston, Boone, and Fort Patrick Henry. These dams are located in five different states and on the Tennessee as well as its tributaries. Total costs on these dams approximates \$621,721,452.00.<sup>10</sup> The Tennessee Valley Authority has acquired thirteen additional dams from other agencies, making a total of thirty-four dams in the river control system. During the war years it became evident that the demands for electric power would far exceed the supply and the Authority launched a program of building steam plants. Eight plants have been constructed at a cost of \$940,200,000.00.<sup>11</sup>

*Electric Power*—For generations the farm homes of the Valley had been lighted with kerosene lamps, the peoples' food had been refrigerated in the cistern, the spring house, or with an ice box, and electric appliances had been virtually non-existent, when in 1933 a transformation originated with the coming of the TVA. In that depression year the area now served by the TVA consumed 1,500,000,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity.<sup>12</sup> World War II was to witness a rapid rise in the use of electric power in the region with 1945 being the top year in production of power by the TVA, reaching a total of 11,500,000,000 kilowatt-hours. An expected sustained decline in the demand for power in the



(Courtesy Knoxville Chamber of Commerce)

*Douglas Dam and Lake, Tennessee Valley Authority*

years immediately following the close of the war failed to materialize and the year 1952 saw the demand reach 23,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours.<sup>13</sup> The record high was reached for the year ending June 30, 1959, when 57,200,000,000 kilowatt-hours were sold, bringing into the TVA a sum of \$236,000,000.

Low rates have, to some extent, been responsible for the increased use of electricity in the area. The same low rates have been responsible for the creation of many new industries in the Valley, causing an increased consumption of electric power. However, the educational program of the TVA has fostered increased use of power in the home and on the farm. A majority of homes in the region are now equipped with electric refrigerators, radios, television sets, air conditioning units, and numerous household devices operated by electric power. No longer does the area farmer milk his cows by lantern light, cool his milk in the cistern, or operate his radio with a battery. He now lives with the conveniences of his urban friend.

*Other Benefits to the People of the Valley*—Cheap and abundant electric power were not the sole benefits brought to the people of the area by TVA. Soil



(Courtesy Johnson City Chamber of Commerce)

### *Watauga Dam*

conservation, forestation and reforestation, industrial development, and flood control have been among the chief contributions to the people. Land is probably the greatest natural resource of a country or region. The millions of acres contained in the valley had suffered for years from poor farming methods and lack of fertilization. The TVA set about to encourage proper farming methods through research and farm demonstration to the farmers. Through research the proper types of fertilizer were developed for the various types of land found in the region. The fertilizer was then made available to the farmer at a cheap price. Many hitherto poor farms in the Valley have been restored to improved production through this process. As a result of the program of TVA, the Department of Agriculture, other public agencies, and an increase in purchasing power, farmers in the valley have increased greatly their use of fertilizers; have shifted a million acres from row crops to close growing crops; have terraced a million acres; and have established nearly a million acres of improved pastures.<sup>15</sup> Research by TVA and state and local institutions has led to new equipment suited to better farming and has aided in the shift to soil-building agriculture.

A chief forester was employed by the Board of Directors in August, 1933.



He has worked primarily with the forestry services of the states, with the clear authorization to develop plans for erosion control, reforestation, and forest improvement. He has sought to accomplish these goals through adequate protection from fire, grazings, insects, and disease; reforestation of all potential forest lands not adequately stocked with desirable and future profitable trees; implementation of sound management practices that will increase the yield of timber; implementation of harvesting and utilization processes so that waste is reduced to the smallest possible amount. This program has resulted in conservation of previously existing forests and the planting of 200,000 acres of new forests.<sup>16</sup>

The great lakes formed by the dams have resulted in many ideal areas for fish and wildlife. Possibly, no other section of the country is more of a sportsmen's paradise than the great valley region. Adjacent to most of the lakes is a recreation area. These areas have been immensely popular with the people. Many citizens are purchasing land and building lodges near these recreation areas.

Industrial development in the region served by the TVA has been rapid and at times spectacular. Industrial employment increased from 222,000 workers in 1929 to 440,000 in 1953, an increase of ninety-nine per cent, while the increase in the nation was only sixty-four per cent.<sup>17</sup> Income in the region from manufacturing grew from \$226,000,000 in 1929 to \$1,363,000,000 in 1953, a growth of five hundred and two per cent as compared to three hundred and twenty-one per cent in the nation. A portion of this growth has probably been due to the expansion of industry on a nation-wide scale but much of it may be attributed to the electrical power that has been made available in the region.

The lower Mississippi River has been free of great floods since 1937. This may be attributed in no small extent to the control of the river stages by the great reservoirs in the valley of the Tennessee River. The mean annual rainfall has not greatly varied in the years since 1937, but the amount of water released into the Ohio River and thence into the great Mississippi has been regulated by the TVA resulting in a material decrease in the danger of floods. This has been of no small value to the farmers along the southern rivers.

*Cheap Electric Power and the Courts*—The greatest part of any controversy over the Tennessee Valley Authority has revolved around the Authority's role in the field of electric power. The work of the TVA in the power field has been widely praised and bitterly attacked. By 1945 TVA had the largest power producing system in the United States and was selling this power at rates so low as to be without precedent. David Lilienthal, one of the three original TVA directors and who was first placed in charge of the agency's power operations, believed that to effectuate the law's policy of a wide and

extensive use of the electric power, to benefit the greatest number of people, it was necessary for the TVA to break sharply with the prevailing methods of fixing electricity rates.<sup>18</sup> The "yardstick" rates embodied in the TVA schedule were not to be an absolute standard of precisely what should be charged for electricity everywhere; but, to return to a belief of Lilienthal, the yardstick in its correct sense did serve a public purpose in leading to a realistic examination of the financial feasibility of low rates.<sup>19</sup> He was successful in demonstrating that drastic reductions in electric rates result in much greater demands for electricity. In the 1953 report of the distributors of TVA power the following account of the increase in power sales was included:

	1933	1953
Consumers served	275,000	1,284,000
Farms served	15,000	423,000
Kilowatt-hours used	1,000,000,000	10,000,000,000
Average residential use	600 kwh	4,292 kwh
Miles of rural line	1,000	100,000
<i>Rates</i>		<i>Cost in cents</i>
Average residential rate	5.7	1.3
Average commercial and industrial rate	2.1	1.0
Average rate-all service	2.7	1.1 <sup>20</sup>

Thus it may be seen that the Lilienthal contention was correct. Much of the opposition to TVA has been embodied in the accusation that only by charging off a large part of their power costs to navigation and flood control have the officials been able to reduce their rates to such a low point. This, perhaps, has been the reason for the suits testing the right of the TVA to sell electric power. Holders of preferred stock in the Alabama Power Company brought suit in 1934 against the company to prevent the company from buying power from the TVA for distribution in the Wilson Dam vicinity. This case, known as the *Ashwander* case, was destined to be carried to the United States Supreme Court, which held that the TVA had the right to sell power produced at Wilson Dam.<sup>21</sup> Hardly had the *Ashwander* case been disposed of when eighteen power companies filed suit, alleging that the TVA had under the false guise of flood control, navigation, and national defense, entered into a great program of power production, which they alleged was its chief aim. A three-judge district court decided every point of contention in favor of the TVA. This decision was sustained by the Supreme Court.<sup>22</sup> This decision, widely hailed by the friends of the TVA, broke the back of legal opposition to the further development of the Valley through the TVA.

With the courts consistently upholding the power of the TVA, Wendell Willkie, president of Commonwealth and Southern, offered to sell the entire



(Courtesy Bristol Chamber of Commerce)

*South Holston Dam*

holdings of that company in the valley region to the TVA. Congress, after a short but hot debate, amended the TVA Act to permit the agency to purchase, through bond issues, all of the properties of Commonwealth and Southern. The purchase was made at a cost of \$78,000,000.<sup>23</sup> Lesser purchases within the area were then made by the TVA and by the end of 1939 the TVA held a virtual monopoly on the sale of electric power in the valley.

*Conflict Within the Board of Directors*—Men possessing distinctly different personalities had been appointed to the first Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority. It was probably inevitable that conflicts would develop within this three man group. Arthur E. Morgan was a competent civil engineer with a strong inclination to engage in social planning. The scope of the TVA gave him opportunity to exercise his desire for such planning. He wanted a broad social and economic plan embracing benevolent paternalism. Morgan wanted to produce power and fertilizer, stimulate industry, promote cooperatives, build



subsistence homesteads, foster expansive educational projects, and sponsor health and housing projects. It was this utopian idealism on the part of the chairman that brought him into conflict with the other two members of the board.

Harcourt A. Morgan brought to his position on the board a wealth of experience in the region and a rich understanding of the people thereof. He thought that many of the ideas of the Antioch College president were visionary and impractical. David Lilienthal appears to have had a distrust for high level social planning. He viewed the Arthur E. Morgan plan for a folk industry with suspicion. Lilienthal had a profound faith in the productivity of machines and thought that there could be no substitute for such.

Harcourt A. Morgan and David Lilienthal had a common suspicion of social planning. It was this distrust combined with a deep concern for their own fields of operation that brought them into a conflict with the chairman. Lilienthal wanted a free hand in power operations and was willing to give Harcourt A. Morgan such liberty in the field of agriculture. The board, by a vote of two to one in August, 1933, had granted autonomy for each member in his respective field. This launched a quiet but bitter struggle among the directors.<sup>24</sup>

The incident that brought the conflict among the directors to the surface was the claim of Major George L. Berry, Tennessee labor leader and onetime United States Senator, for remuneration due to the flooding of lands under which he owned mineral rights. Arthur E. Morgan believed that there might be bad faith on the part of Berry and his associates. The chairman believed that Berry should be prosecuted on charges of conspiring to defraud the government. In March, 1938, Chairman Morgan brought the conflict into the open by charging that his colleagues did not show unselfish public service.<sup>25</sup> President Roosevelt released the text of a letter from Lilienthal and Harcourt Morgan charging that the chairman had obstructed the implementation of determined policies.<sup>26</sup> They called on him to desist or resign.

President Roosevelt called the feuding directors to a conference, apparently in the belief that harmony could be restored. The hope of restored harmony was a forlorn hope and the President found it necessary to remove the chairman. The enemies of TVA had only short lived hopes that internal strife within the board would weaken the great social experiment. Harcourt A. Morgan became chairman and the president appointed former Senator James P. Pope of Idaho to the vacancy.

*Senator K. D. McKellar and the Tennessee Valley Authority*—Senator McKellar had strongly supported the act creating the Tennessee Valley Authority. He had faithfully supported all appropriations for the continuance of construction of dams and development of the Valley. Nevertheless, he had found it difficult to adjust to the idea that there was no political patronage involved in the Author-

ity. The patronage-minded senator had complained bitterly that his recommendations for appointments to positions within the TVA had been ignored.<sup>27</sup> These complaints had started during the administration of the first Morgan as chairman. A new chairman brought no obvious change in the patronage situation. The Senator's continued support had probably, in a large measure, been due to the location of headquarters of the TVA in Knoxville. It was also evident that it would be politically inexpedient to attack an institution that was bringing so many blessings to the people of the state.

Late in 1941 the senior Senator took the floor of the Senate to speak in opposition to the building of Douglas Dam on the French Broad River. McKellar also seized the opportunity to deliver a frontal assault on David Lilienthal, who had succeeded to the chairmanship a few months previously. He accused the chairman of being obstinate and called for his resignation. The Senator was determined and brought about the defeat of the bill authorizing the construction of Douglas Dam. Pearl Harbor forced the Senator to cease fighting the construction of Douglas Dam as it was needed to provide power for the defense effort. Nevertheless, he continued his bitter attacks upon Chairman Lilienthal, waged war to bring the TVA under close congressional direction, and insisted that TVA should ask for appropriations like any other government agency. The aging Senator failed in all of his efforts to harness TVA to his will, but his attacks on the chairman were unrelenting.<sup>28</sup> In 1946, when President Truman sought the appointment of Lilienthal as chairman of the new atomic energy commission, McKellar led the fight against him but without success.<sup>29</sup> Thirty years of service to the people of Tennessee had given the aged Senator an especial place in their affections but there was now strong reaction against him because of his fight on Lilienthal.

*Dixon-Yates*—Four years of war had dimmed the enthusiasm of the people of Tennessee and much of the nation for the idea of social reform. The presidential election of 1952 witnessed a resurgence of the sanctity of private enterprise. The campaign was waged on the idea that the Democratic administration had been infiltrated by the Socialists or the Communists. Republican candidate Dwight Eisenhower, in a campaign speech on the Memphis waterfront, promised the continued maintenance of TVA at maximum efficiency.<sup>30</sup> People in the Valley were assured that the great enterprise had nothing to fear from a Republican administration. Tennessee, by a small majority, gave its electoral vote to the popular Eisenhower.

Meanwhile, the TVA was seeking the construction of a new steam plant on the Mississippi River north of Memphis. The new administration evidenced little relish for the construction of a plant on the outer perimeter of the valley area. Consequently, funds were not forthcoming for this project. President Eisenhower then instructed the Atomic Energy Commission to negotiate with

Dixon-Yates for the construction of a steam plant on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi near West Memphis. This precipitated a fight between the advocates of public power and the private power companies. The Memphis City Commission really settled the controversy when it announced plans to build its own steam plant on the Tennessee side of the river. The government then cancelled its contract with Dixon-Yates. Especially active in this fight were Senator Estes Kefauver, Senator Albert Gore, and Representative Clifford Davis. The steam plant in Memphis has been completed and is now supplying most of the power to the city.

*Financing TVA*—The Dixon-Yates controversy launched a long fight over the question of financing TVA. The Authority had been financed by appropriations from the federal government since its creation in 1933. It had also received considerable funds through the sale of electric power and fertilizer. However, such methods of financing did not permit the expansion necessary to a complete service of the area. Funds were badly needed for the construction of new generating plants. Senators Kefauver and Gore, with other friends of public power, had made repeated efforts to get a self-financing bill passed by the Congress. President Eisenhower, while not opposed to self-financing, had failed to give such a plan strong support. Largely due to the efforts of Representative Clifford Davis the Congress passed a bill authorizing the TVA to issue \$750,000,000 worth of revenue bonds for the purpose of building additional generating plants. President Eisenhower signed this bill August 5, 1959.<sup>31</sup> The *Memphis Commercial Appeal* commented editorially, "TVA has come of age. And the South beams with the fondness of parenthood."<sup>32</sup>

It was a fitting culmination of a struggle for public power in Tennessee that has lasted for more than a quarter of a century. This period has witnessed the growth of Tennessee into an important industrial state, the reforestation of previously barren acres, the electrification of thousands of farms, the development of a great fishing and recreation area, and a steady improvement in the living conditions of thousands of Tennesseans. Truly it has been a quarter of a century of substantial progress for the people of the Volunteer State.

#### CHAPTER XL—NOTES

1. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston, 1959), 321.
2. *Ibid.*, 322.
3. *Ibid.*, 324.
4. Roscoe C. Martin *et al.*, *TVA, The First Twenty Years* (Knoxville and Tuscaloosa), 24.
5. *New York Times*, April 27, 1933.



6. Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, April 28, 1933.
7. Schlesinger, *The Coming of the New Deal*, 326.
8. *Ibid.*, 327.
9. *Ibid.*, 329.
10. Martin *et al.*, *TVA, The First Twenty Years*, 89.
11. *Ibid.*, 89.
12. James Dahir, *Region Building, Community Development Lessons from the Tennessee Valley* (New York, 1955), 73.
13. *Ibid.*, 73.
14. Memphis *Press-Scimitar*, August 5, 1959.
15. Gordon R. Clapp, *The TVA, An Approach to the Development of a Region* (Chicago, 1955), 94.
16. *Ibid.*, 116-118.
17. Martin *et al.*, *TVA, The First Twenty Years*, 224-25.
18. *Ibid.*, 116-118.
19. David E. Lilienthal, *TVA, Democracy on the March* (New York, 1944), 23.
20. Dahir, *Region Building*, 73.
21. Martin *et al.*, *TVA, The First Twenty Years*, 30.
22. *Ibid.*, 32-33.
23. *Ibid.*, 33.
24. Schlesinger, *The Coming of the New Deal*, 329.
25. Donald Davidson, *The Tennessee, The New River, Civil War to TVA* (New York, 1948), 316.
26. *Ibid.*, 316.
27. *Ibid.*, 329.
28. *Ibid.*, 329.
29. *Ibid.*, 330.
30. *The Commercial Appeal*, October 26, 1952.
31. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1959.
32. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1959.

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## CHAPTER XLI

### *The New Deal in Tennessee*

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TENNESSEANS WERE GOING about their every day duties on the morning of October 24, 1929, with no fear of the future in their minds. A bountiful harvest of corn, cotton, and tobacco was being gathered. The year had been a good one for the farmers of this agricultural state. The state was enjoying another year of heavy building. Panics and depressions were far removed from the minds of the substantial majority of the people. New York, Wall Street, and the stock market did not concern greatly the farmers of Fayette, Maury, and Greene counties. However, in Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Memphis business men read in the afternoon papers of a crashing stock market. Perhaps this news struck a momentary chord of fear in the minds of the urban residents, but few of these men realized that a great depression was just around the corner.

The Nashville *Banner* predicted with sturdy optimism that 1930 would be a better business year than 1929. It further recalled that business had been better in 1929 than it had in 1928.<sup>1</sup>

*Drouth and Depression*—Crops were planted early in the spring of 1930. The soil had been carefully prepared, heavy plantings of cotton, corn, and tobacco had been made by the Tennessee farmers. The weather was favorable until mid-May, and the farmers were preparing for a heavy yield. However, they were doomed to disappointment for by June the crops were beginning to suffer for the want of rain. A drouth had developed that would last until harvesting time. Corn withered and burned in the field, the leaves of the cotton stalk became so dry that they could be crumbled in the hand. Vegetable gardens failed to produce. The situation became so critical that President Hoover announced that he would head a relief drive for the benefit of the drouth suffering farmers of the nation.<sup>2</sup> There would be much need of that relief in Tennessee. Experts in the state department of agriculture estimated that the drouth would cost the state \$100,000,000.<sup>3</sup> Trade in the cities declined to the extent that merchants were caught with heavy inventories and as sales declined employees were laid off. Farmers started coming to the cities in search of work. The situation was deteriorating rapidly when the federal government announced

plans for help to the bewildered farmers. Financial assistance to cotton farmers to enable them to carry the 1930 crop until it could be marketed in an orderly manner was offered by the Federal Intermediate Credit Banks.<sup>4</sup> Many Tennessee farmers availed themselves of this opportunity and borrowed money. This plan, however, did not bring the desired amount of security to the cotton growers. A conference committee in Congress agreed upon an emergency drouth relief appropriation of \$45,000,000.<sup>5</sup> The Tennessee farmers returned to their fields with the advent of planting time in 1931. Large acreages were again prepared and planted in cotton, corn, tobacco, and other crops. The yield that year was good and the prices were low, again leaving the farmer in a precarious financial situation. President Hoover and his advisers were searching for ways of relieving the plight of the farmers without committing the government to direct control of agriculture. The federal Farm Board announced that it was ready to sell from the government's great stocks of wheat and cotton to relief organizations for the aid of destitute and suffering people on a deferred payment plan.<sup>6</sup> The price of farm commodities continued to be depressed during the year of 1932 and the yield did not suffer the same degree of depression that afflicted the price.

*Roosevelt and a New Day for the Farmers*—Franklin D. Roosevelt was swept into the presidency by a resounding majority in 1932. Tennesseans gave the New York governor an overwhelming vote of confidence. The new administration immediately geared its newly designed farm relief-inflation machinery for a start on a vast price-lifting experiment aimed at breaking the grip of the now full grown depression. This measure gave the President authority to order the expansion of the currency and the devaluation of the dollar as well as the inflation of credit through the Federal Reserve System. It was far reaching reform legislation. The secretary of agriculture was given wide powers to raise commodity prices through marketing agreements, production control, and processing taxes.<sup>7</sup> Secretary Henry Wallace moved at once to reduce the amount of each crop that had been planted. Farm agents in every county of the state were notified of the procedures for paying the grower for the acreages to be plowed under. Conferences were held with farmers in each county of the state and soon the plows were destroying that which they had cultivated for three months. Meanwhile the Federal Land Banks were authorized to lend the farmers sums of money ranging from \$100 to \$50,000. The individual farm had to be free of encumbrance and then it stood as security for the loan.<sup>8</sup> These acts did much to improve the financial status of the Tennessee farmer.

However, the administration had a continuing plan of crop control and the Agricultural Adjustment Act provided that farmers must agree to an acreage reduction in the years ahead. Secretary Wallace announced that the purpose of the program was to do away with the immense carryover of commodities from





(Courtesy Lenoir City Chamber of Commerce)

*Lenoir City—Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company Plant*

one crop year to another.<sup>9</sup> State Commissioner of Agriculture O. E. Van Cleave estimated that the effect in Tennessee in “dollars and cents” was the difference between \$32,330,000 and \$73,049,920 on three essential crops—cotton, wheat, and corn. He further stated that the plan meant the rehabilitation of agriculture in the state.<sup>10</sup> The “Triple A” also loaned money to the cotton farmers if they would agree to an acreage reduction in the years 1934 and 1935. In 1936 the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the “Triple A,” thereby confronting the Tennessee farmers with the possible loss of all that they had gained in the past three years. President Roosevelt moved quickly into the breach and announced a plan for paying the farmer for soil conservation. The farmer had only to shift his land from soil depleting crops to soil building crops and for this he was paid what is known as parity.\* Parity income has been the goal of the government’s farm policy since that time. The coming to power of the Republicans in 1952 has not changed that policy.

*Roads and Highways*—Armies of unemployed workers called to the minds of many Tennessee leaders the need for new roads and highways as well as the repairing of already existing highways. Mayor Watkins Overton of Memphis was among the first Tennessee leaders to issue a call for federal aid for constructing highways.<sup>11</sup> The militant mayor was looking to the needs of his city and thinking in terms of work relief for his constituents.

Tennessee was allocated \$1,072,535 in additional federal highway funds on April 4, 1930. Also, an advance was made by the government to the states

\* Parity is the ratio between the purchasing power of farm persons and that of the net income of non-farm persons that prevailed from August, 1909 to July, 1914.

of funds that ordinarily would not have been received until January 1, 1931.<sup>12</sup> This advance was made in response to the plea of governors that the money was needed to provide work relief for the sufferers from the drouth. With the receipt of these funds, state officials tried to provide relief to the stricken people by launching a program of road building.

Business was in a state of almost complete inactivity and the numbers of unemployed continued to grow. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation stepped into the breach by allocating to the state \$780,000 in relief funds for destitute unemployed persons in fifty-five drouth-afflicted counties of the state. State Highway Commissioner R. H. Baker announced that this money had employed 29,607 persons on state and county roads. Hours of work given to the men were determined by the number of dependents in his family.<sup>13</sup>

President Roosevelt, through the National Industrial Recovery Act, materially accelerated the building of roads in the state. Commissioner F. W. Webster attended a Washington conference and on his return announced that Tennessee had been given \$9,000,000 for highway construction. This work would be let through a series of contracts and would give employment to more than 14,000 men. This allotment was followed in 1935 by a grant of \$8,000,000 from the federal government. These allotments provided for the building of many farm to market roads in the state, for repairing existing highways, and the construction of new routes of travel. They also did much to bring relief to many Tennesseans who were in economic distress.

*Banks*—Financial institutions of Tennessee were in distress at the time of the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt. Many banks had been forced to close their doors and many others were tottering on the brink of ruin. Depositors had been withdrawing their funds from banks and panic conditions had developed among the people. The new President immediately declared a bank holiday throughout the nation. All banks in Tennessee closed their doors pending an examination of their books to determine if they qualified to continue business. Nashville banks reopened on March 9, 1933, on a scrip basis. This plan appeared to facilitate business in the city. This plan was also tried by other Tennessee municipalities but was short lived for on March 14, 1933, the majority of the banks received clearance for resuming normal business. The federal government guaranteed deposits to the extent of \$5,000 for each depositor and confidence in the banks of the state was restored. By the end of 1933 every bank in the state was qualified under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.<sup>14</sup> This act of the federal government was among the most valuable of the new administration's policies in restoring economic prosperity to the Volunteer State.

*Reforestation*—Before he had been in office a month the new President announced a broad plan for reforestation that would include conservation camps

in Tennessee.<sup>15</sup> Senator Kenneth McKellar immediately announced that he had been assured that one of the first camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps would be located in this state.<sup>16</sup> Developments came rapidly in this program and by November 13, 1933, the state had thirty-five camps, nine of which were located in national parks. These camps contained a total of 55,250 young men, who sent home to 27,000 dependents a total of \$183,889 each month.<sup>17</sup> These camps contributed richly to reforestation and the conservation of natural resources in the state. They also provided work for thousands of unemployed and brought relief to their families.

*Home Owners Loan Corporation*—As the depression made deep inroads into the economy of Tennessee, thousands of home owners were faced with the possibility of losing their homes by foreclosure of existing mortgages. Unemployment and poor prices for commodities had caused many people to fail to pay monthly notes on their homes. The Home Owners Loan Corporation was created by an act of Congress on June 4, 1933. Senators McKellar and Bachman joined with Representative Joseph Byrns to bring about plans for making Tennessee the first state in which a complete plan was agreed upon for establishing an office. Therefore, Tennesseans had the pleasure of being the first beneficiary of the new organization for refinancing home loans. Charles H. Litterer, Nashville, was appointed director of the state office and he was soon busy processing applications for loans. This office completed 500 loans in the month of January, 1934, for a total of \$1,285,149. By the end of eighteen months of operation the office had completed loans to the amount of \$25,539,318.<sup>18</sup> This act also resulted in owners paying property taxes that had been long delinquent.

Further impetus toward economic recovery in Tennessee was given by the passage of the Federal Housing Act in August 1934. This act enabled many Tennesseans to repair and remodel their homes. It resulted in work for thousands of people.

*Relief Funds for Tennessee*—There will possibly never be complete agreement on the number of men who were unemployed in Tennessee. Seasonal workers were listed as unemployed when their work season was over. There can be little doubt that the situation was grave in the state before local, state, and federal officials took official cognizance of the condition. A conference of county judges and builders was held in Nashville on September 25, 1930. Governor Henry Horton told the assembly that the crises was due to a business depression augmented by a general drouth. He said that the condition was temporary, but assured the groups that the state was doing everything possible by employing more men in road work than ever before.<sup>19</sup> The situation did not improve as Horton and others had expected, and the national government passed a \$2,000,000,000 relief bill on July 17, 1938. This appropriation was the



first of a long series of federal grants for the relief of the distressed people of the country. Tennessee received its share from the first appropriation and from all subsequent funds made available in Washington, Mayor Hilary E. Howse, Nashville, made one of the first requests for relief funds when he asked for \$200,000 for his city on October 11, 1932. With the coming of Franklin D. Roosevelt into office the Civil Works Administration was established. Tennessee received its full quota of funds for these projects. Cities and counties immediately started filing applications for work on roads, for building new jails, and for repairs on school buildings. An administrator was appointed for the state in the person of Colonel Walter Simpson, and soon each county had an administrator. The first program was followed by the Tennessee Emergency Relief Administration which carried on the old program of its predecessor and initiated many new projects of its own. Agencies of local government were required to buy a portion of the materials and the TERA supplied the labor from the relief rolls of the county. Workers were permitted only a certain number of days work per month and common laborers in the state were permitted to earn only \$19.00 per month. Many people made this their maximum monthly income and refused to earn additional money for fear that they might lose their status on the relief rolls. This great pouring of federal funds into the state did not solve the problem of unemployment, for on March 17, 1935, requisition was made for an increase of 6,874 families for the month of April. This represented an increase of eight per cent over the month of March.<sup>20</sup> The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was replaced by the Works Progress Administration in 1935. The national administration was dipping heavily into the alphabet. Colonel Harry S. Berry was appointed administrator for these programs and announced on September 9, 1935, that more than \$700,000 worth of projects had been forwarded to Washington for approval. Six days later he announced that sufficient projects had been approved to put 5,000 men to work.<sup>21</sup> The projects included new school buildings, new roads, and repairs of existing buildings and roads. It was the most comprehensive program of public works ever undertaken in the state.

*The Public Works Administration*—One of the soundest of the New Deal programs was the Public Works Administration. The program provided for permanent installations and buildings to be jointly financed by the federal government and the proper agency of local or state government. This program started in Tennessee in October, 1933, under the direction of Harry S. Berry. Berry announced on October 28, 1933, that his office had received applications for projects amounting to \$4,566,000.<sup>22</sup> One of the early projects approved in the state was for the construction of two homes for the aged in Nashville. The government gave \$57,400 on these projects which represented thirty per cent of labor and material costs on a total cost of \$251,600.<sup>23</sup> This project was re-

presentative of the early projects approved in the state. Early in 1935 the Tennessee office of the PWA announced that an inventory showed that Tennessee needed a total of \$400,000,000 worth of useful projects. Officials of the various agencies of the state government announced that applications for \$400,000,000 worth of projects would be submitted. Projects were submitted for school buildings, municipal sewage disposal systems, new courthouses and jails, and installations in city zoos. Most of the proposals submitted were approved and as many as 50,000 people were employed on the various projects.

Colonel Harry S. Berry did not last long as state administrator for the Public Works Administration. The doughty soldier of World War I permitted his enthusiasm to lead him into writing a letter that conveyed the impression that the federal government would not expect repayment of loans for public works proposals. Secretary Harold Ickes promptly removed Berry and named Kenneth Markwell, Memphis engineer, to replace him.

*Other Federal Projects*—Education received a full share of benefits from the New Deal. There existed in the state the problem of adult education, a field in which public schools had been inactive, and the problem of many persons holding teacher certificates who had been unable to get positions. The state relief authorities received authority from Washington on August 8, 1933, to employ these teachers at wages of \$2.40 per day to teach adults to read and write. Local school authorities immediately made application for approval of personnel and the establishment of adult education centers. There was also the problem of schools closing before the end of the normal term because of the shortage of funds. Commissioner Walter D. Cocking secured approval from the TERA for paying the teachers' salaries for the balance of the school year which the local unit was unable to finance. The state received some \$5,000,000 for this purpose in 1934.<sup>24</sup>

The National Youth Administration undertook to guarantee many young people in the state who were financially unable to pay for a college education the opportunity of attending college. Approved youngsters were paid \$15.00 per month for doing work detailed by college administrators under the supervision of faculty members. Hundreds of Tennessee men and women were thus given the opportunity of attending college.

The school lunch program was implemented in every county of the state. The state direction of this program was under the capable leadership of Mrs. Thomas N. Coppedge, Memphis. Surplus commodities were supplied to the counties and cities. Thousands of youngsters from low income homes received hot lunches in the schools. Canning centers were established in the counties and food was preserved for this program by relief workers. School gardens were planted and each winter the children in the public schools received a balanced diet.

A terminal date for the economic depression cannot be accurately determined. New Dealers maintain that the country was lifting from the throes of distress long before the outbreak of World War II. Opponents of the New Deal argue that the coming of the war ended the depression as thousands of men went into the armed forces and other thousands found work in the defense plants. There, however, seems little doubt that the living standards of most Tennesseans were improved by the emergency methods of the federal government.

The first two years of the New Deal witnessed the expenditure of \$350,000,000 in the state in the form of loans, grants, and other forms of allotments. This figure included the expenditures on the Tennessee Valley Authority.<sup>25</sup> It would be impossible to estimate the amount of stimulation that this huge sum gave to business or the number of hungry mouths that were fed because the money was made available. The state program has been attacked as being a waste of money but there stands today a great series of dams along the Tennessee River, a number of good buildings, and greater numbers of happier people in the state because there was a New Deal.

#### CHAPTER XLI—NOTES

1. Nashville *Banner*, December 29, 1929.
2. *The Commercial Appeal*, August 9, 1930.
3. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1930.
4. Nashville *Banner*, September 24, 1930.
5. *Ibid.*, December 19, 1930.
6. Nashville *Tennessean*, October 5, 1931.
7. *The Commercial Appeal*, May 11, 1933.
8. Nashville *Banner*, July 19, 1933.
9. David L. Cohn, *The Life and Times of King Cotton* (New York, 1956), 255.
10. Nashville *Banner*, August 15, 1933.
11. *The Commercial Appeal*, January 1, 1930.
12. Nashville *Tennessean*, April 7, 1930.
13. Nashville *Banner*, December 14, 1932.
14. *Ibid.*, December 29, 1933.
15. *Ibid.*, April 4, 1933.
16. *Ibid.*, April 4, 1933.
17. *The Commercial Appeal*, April 18, 1933.
18. Nashville *Banner*, December 31, 1934.
19. *The Commercial Appeal*, September 25, 1930.
20. Nashville *Banner*, March 17, 1935.
21. *Ibid.*, September 16, 1935.
22. *Ibid.*, October 28, 1933.
23. The Nashville *Tennessean*, November 22, 1933.
24. *Ibid.*, March 4, 1934.
25. Nashville *Banner*, October 25, 1935.



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## CHAPTER XLII

### *The Volunteer State and World War II*

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**M**OST TENNESSEANS HAD FINISHED a bounteous dinner and settled in the comforts of their living rooms on Sunday afternoon, December 7, 1941, when the news came over the radio that the Japanese were attacking Pearl Harbor. It was a rude awakening for a people who had viewed in complacent safety the turmoil of war in Europe for more than two years. Perhaps, some Tennesseans had believed that the United States would eventually be drawn into the war, but few of them had realized that this country would become the victim of a sneak attack on the installations at Pearl Harbor.

The nation had taken a few precautions against the possibility of future American involvement. New defense plants had been put into operation and a Selective Service Act had been passed by Congress. Large numbers of young men had been inducted into the armed forces and numerous others were awaiting induction. Nevertheless the nation was poorly prepared for war and Tennessee was no better prepared than other states.

*Tennessee Goes to War*—However, it did not take long for the people of Tennessee to emerge from their state of lethargy. Hardly had President Roosevelt delivered his historic message of December 8, 1941, to the Congress, when Governor Prentice Cooper announced the formation of the Tennessee Defense Council. The young chief executive appointed Major General Lytle Brown, Major Rutledge Smith, and Bascom Jones to serve on this council with him.<sup>1</sup> General Brown had a distinguished military career behind him, while Major Smith had been responsible for organizing the people of the state in World War I. Mr. Jones was a prominent leader in civic affairs in Nashville. This group of four citizens assumed responsibility for organizing the people of Tennessee and mobilizing the human and natural resources of the state for the next four years. This group lost little time in assuming their duties.

Immediately following the formation of the defense council Governor Cooper appointed Adjutant-General T. A. Frazier state director of Selective Service. General Frazier soon established a highly efficient organization for the orderly induction of young Tennesseans into the armed forces. He coordinated the work of the Selective Service Boards in the ninety-five counties of the



(From "Somewhere in Tennessee with Second Army")

*Luncheon given by Lt. Gen. L. R. Frendendall for City and County Officials and Newspapermen of the war maneuver area, World War II; Judge Litton Hickman speaking*

state. Fort Oglethorpe, located near Chattanooga but in Georgia, early became the principal post for the induction of young men into the service. Later Camp Forrest, near Tullahoma, replaced Oglethorpe as the principal induction center for the young men of the state. However, many young Tennessee women went into the Women's Army Corps at the Georgia post.

American reverses in the early days of the war soon made it evident that virtually every phase of life in the state would have to be adjusted to the great task of winning the struggle against the totalitarian countries. Automobile tires were among the first items of use to be announced by the government as critical to the war effort. General Lytle Brown was appointed by the governor to direct tire rationing in the state. General Brown soon announced rationing boards for every county in the state and Tennesseans had to apply for certificates before they could purchase new tires or have old ones retreaded. The people readily accepted this new departure in their normal lives.<sup>2</sup>

*Rationing Becomes General*—German submarine warfare soon made the importation of coffee and sugar difficult. This difficulty of importation, added to the necessity for diverting tons of the two commodities to the use of the expanding armed forces, soon necessitated rationing of most food items.

Tennesseans formed lines at the rationing offices to secure strange coupon books to be used in the purchase of foods. Stamps were a new departure for the people of the state but they accepted the situation with only a nominal amount of complaining. The people of Tennessee tightened their belts, ate less meat, used less sugar in their coffee and tea, and made other home front sacrifices for the men in the service.

Gasoline rationing forced the people to use their automobiles less. Car pools among workers in the cities were organized. City transit companies did a flourishing business as people were forced to use public service transportation. However, few workers were kept from defense plants by lack of transportation. Moreover, individuals felt the need to conserve their automobiles, for new ones were not being manufactured and offered for sale.

*Defense Plants in Tennessee*—A number of defense plants had been opened in the state prior to Pearl Harbor. E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Company had opened a large powder plant near Millington in 1940. This plant was producing powder for France before the United States became involved in the war. Consolidated-Vultee Aircraft Corporation established a plant in Nashville in May, 1940. This plant was producing planes for British combat service when the United States was drawn into the war.<sup>3</sup> Numerous other Tennessee industries were filling contracts for France and England before the American needs became manifest.

With the entrance of the United States into the conflict, the industrial resources of Tennessee were dedicated to the production of war materials. New plants were built and put into production. Procter and Gamble, soap manufacturing company, was given a contract for operating a shell loading plant at Milan. This was one of the largest war industries in the state and employed more than 5,000 workers.<sup>4</sup>

The greatest of all Tennessee industries was the Oak Ridge Atomic Bomb Plant. The site of this great industry, eighteen miles west of Knoxville, was acquired in the autumn of 1942 by the national government. By mid-summer of 1943 a great industrial plant had been erected, and housing for a city of 75,000 inhabitants had been built. This development has been described as the best kept secret of World War II.<sup>5</sup> Few persons outside of that section of Tennessee in which Oak Ridge is situated knew much about the great development in the mountains. Many people knew that Oak Ridge was being built around a vital, secret war project. The people who worked on this great project did not discuss their work with other people, and the inhabitants of the surrounding country refrained from too much discussion with outsiders. But the remarkable feature of this gigantic secret was that the inhabitants themselves, with the exception of a few key men, knew nothing about the purpose of the new city, what it was built for, or what its giant plants were producing.





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Oak Ridge—City Administration Building*

The work was compartmentalized so that each worker knew only his own job and had not the slightest knowledge of how his part fitted into the whole. Only a few top-ranking scientists, engineers, and army officers knew the full implications of the project, but in some of these instances there were limitations. The head of one plant was kept completely insulated from other plants where different processes and methods were in use.<sup>6</sup> For more than three years Tennesseans wondered about and speculated on what was going on at Oak Ridge. Their curiosity was satisfied on August 6, 1945, when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. The mystery was further dispelled three days later when a bomb fell on Nagasaki. These bombs had been produced, in part, at Oak Ridge. Their use no doubt hastened the end of the war. Tennessee had made a vital contribution to the winning blow.

Oak Ridge was the residential center for the workers in one subdivision of the Manhattan Engineer District, known as Clinton Engineer Works. This project covered a huge reservation of 59,000 acres of which Oak Ridge covered

about eight square miles. Oak Ridge was the administrative center for the entire Manhattan District which includes several divisions. Some of these divisions were located in other sections of the nation.<sup>7</sup> The plants at Oak Ridge included more than 425 buildings. At the close of the war the town of Oak Ridge had 10,000 family units, 13,000 dormitory spaces, 16,000 hutment and barrack spaces, and more than 5,000 trailers. People from every section of the nation had been brought to this new city, making it the fifth largest city in the state. After the war the project came under the supervision of the Atomic Energy Commission, and Oak Ridge recently gained its independence of federal control.

*Tennessee Industries Win the Coveted "E"*—The Army-Navy "E" was awarded to American industries for excellency and efficiency in production. A considerable number of Tennessee plants received this award while engaged in defense production. Among the plants so honored were the Aluminum Company of America, at Alcoa, the Victor Chemical Works, Mt. Pleasant, the Lebanon Woolen Mills, Lebanon, the Tennessee Enamel Manufacturing Company, Nashville, the United States Rubber Company, Shelbyville, Nashville Bridge Company, Nashville, Monsanto Chemical Company, Columbia, the Tennessee Eastman Company, Kingsport, Pidgeon-Thomas Iron Works, Memphis, and the Ford Plant, Memphis.<sup>8</sup>

War contracts awarded to Tennessee firms approximated a total of \$1,250,000,000. These contracts were for ships, arms, munitions, clothing, food and every item that could be produced in the state for the use of the fighting forces. These industries employed more than 200,000 men and women. Many men gave up their normal pursuits to enter defense industry. Thousands of housewives went to work in defense industries.

*Training Centers*—In contrast to World War I when not one soldier was trained for combat in the Volunteer State, World War II saw twenty-eight divisions and many detached units trained in the twenty-one counties of the Middle Tennessee maneuver area.<sup>9</sup> This area, which reached from the Blue Grass region to the Cumberland Mountains, was geographically suited to simulated war conditions.

Camp Forrest, originally known as Camp Peay, was completed in October, 1940. The camp proper contains 13,000 acres of land and is located near Tullahoma. It was used as a year-around training center for infantry, artillery, engineer, and signal corp units. This camp also contained a hospital center and late in the war was made a prisoner hospital. Camp Forrest also served as an induction center for large numbers of men drafted into the armed forces.

Camp Tyson, named for General Lawrence D. Tyson of World War I service, was a barrage balloon training center. It was located near Paris. This camp was discontinued when it became evident that the country would not have a great need for barrage balloons.





(From "Somewhere in Tennessee with Second Army")

*Second Army Easter Services, 1943, being broadcast over NBC Army Hour during maneuvers*

Camp Campbell was located near the Kentucky-Tennessee line and many of its men were trained on Tennessee soil.

The Army Air Force established an important training center at Smyrna in Rutherford County. This 3,300 acre field, was built at a cost of more than \$12,000,000 and was established for the purpose of training pilots for the B-24 Liberator bomber. It was the first such training center established in this country.<sup>10</sup> Later a school for the training of flying instructors was established on the Smyrna base. Thousand of bomber pilots were trained at this field.

Halls, in Lauderdale County, was the scene of another important Army Air Force training field. This field was also used for training bomber pilots.

A ferry command was established near the municipal airport in Memphis, and planes were constantly being flown from Tennessee to their overseas destination.

Early in the war a great naval base was established at Millington. This base was capable of caring for 14,000 men during a training period. Later a Naval Air School was established adjacent to the base. This Millington base was the largest inland naval operation in the country.

General Ben Lear, commander of the Second Army, established the headquarters of that army at the Mid-South Fair Grounds in Memphis.



Tennessee was virtually an armed camp for the greater part of the war. Thousands of fighting men were trained in the Volunteer State and other thousands were transported across the state to camps and centers in other states.

Tennessee sent a total of 308,199 men into the armed forces, approximately ten per cent of the population. Forty-five Tennessee industrial plants were awarded the Army-Navy "E". More than \$48,000,000 worth of ships were built in Memphis and Nashville.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the proud old Volunteer State contributed heavily to the fighting forces of the nation.

*Service Hospitals*—Memphis was early selected as the site of one of the great hospitals built in the south. The Kennedy Army Hospital, located in the eastern section of the city, was rapidly constructed so as to receive men wounded in the early battles of the war. This hospital treated thousands of wounded soldiers. It has since been declared a permanent veteran's hospital and will soon be rebuilt.

Thayer Hospital, located near Nashville, was built in 1943 and received its first patients in November of that year. This hospital, located on a 144 acre reservation, was composed of 155 buildings. A total of more than 13,000 men were treated at this hospital during the war.<sup>12</sup> Virtually every military post in the state had its own hospital.

*The Civilian Front*—War in the modern world embraces the total population of a nation. No longer can civilians remain detached from war. They are threatened with bombing attacks and the possibility of invasion. Although no American cities were bombed in World War II, there was the constant possibility of such attempts by the enemy. To prepare the people of the state for such an emergency, Governor Cooper appointed Will R. Manier, prominent Nashville attorney as state coordinator for defense. The Governor announced that Manier's duties would be to coordinate the various defense activities of the state. Manier lost no time in setting about his duties. A school for civilian defense teachers was convened at Peabody College in May, 1942.\* The coordinator brought in teachers from the various branches of the armed services to instruct civic leaders in teaching the art of civilian defense. Approximately one hundred leaders, from each section of the state, attended this school and were asked to return to their homes, organize similar schools, and train the people of the state to defend themselves against bombing attacks, fire bombs, and gas attacks. Such schools were held in every college in the state. This plan was then carried to the ward and precinct level in the cities and to each rural community. The competent Will Manier had soon taught the majority of the people of the state to take care of themselves in the event of enemy attack.

\* The writer attended this school at Peabody College and later set up training schools for Memphis and Shelby County at Memphis State University. He ran such schools for a period of six weeks.



(From "Somewhere in Tennessee with Second Army")

*War Maneuver Flanking Attack at Carthage from direction of Gordonsville,  
May, 1943*

Under the able leadership of Manier, every city in the state had air raid wardens, volunteer fire fighters, first aid workers, and all of the necessary personnel for making the state well guarded against the disaster of enemy attack.

Mr. Manier then envisioned the organization of a Citizens Service Corps, designed to build and bolster war time morale among the people of the state. A meeting for this purpose was held at Peabody College on August 17, 1942. The organization became a reality when the attendants at this meeting returned to their homes to hold other meetings and organize such groups in every county of the state.

Virtually every citizen of the state soon became involved in the war effort. The people responded wholeheartedly to each call from the state coordinator, and civilian morale in Tennessee remained high throughout the state.

Leonard Sisk, prominent Nashville civic leader, was appointed by Governor Cooper as state salvage officer. Numerous drives were held to collect



(From "Somewhere in Tennessee with Second Army")

### *Bond Sales in Wilson County in World War II*

scrap metal and scrap rubber. Again there was no lack of response among the people.

*Navy Ships Named for Tennesseans*—Five destroyer escorts were named for Tennesseans killed in the war. They were the *Gandy*, named for Andrew Jackson Gandy, Chattanooga; the *Cates*, named for William Finney Cates, Memphis; the *Daniel*, named for Hugh Spencer Daniel, Chattanooga; the *Vance*, named for Joseph William Vance, Jr., Memphis; and the *Cockrill*, named for Dan Cockrill, Nashville.

The U. S. S. *Caperton*, a destroyer, was named in honor of Admiral William B. Caperton, Spring Hill, Tennessee's first full admiral since David Farragut. Admiral Caperton had a distinguished record during World War I. In addition to these ships the navy had the cruisers *Knoxville*, *Chattanooga*, *Nashville*, and *Memphis*. Five destroyers were also named for prominent Tennesseans: the *Farragut*, *Maury*, *Noa*, *Balch*, *Gleaves*, and *Lea*.

*Colleges*—Every state-supported college had training units for some branch of the service during the war. The University of Tennessee also did good work in training young men through its Reserve Officer Training Corps. Special units were sent to the other state colleges as well as the University. Privately-



supported colleges and universities were also assigned units. Among this group were Vanderbilt, Southwestern, Union, and the University of the South.

Tennesseans had served in every war since the admission of the state into the Union. They had followed Jackson to New Orleans, Scott to Mexico City, Lee and Meade to Gettysburg, Dewey to Manila, and Pershing to France, but never before had so many of them marched away to fight. They fought in the Pacific, North Africa, Italy, and France. In each action they added lustre to the proud old name of the Volunteer State. They marched away in the confident knowledge that the people at home were maintaining an unbroken morale on the home front.

#### CHAPTER XLII—NOTES

1. Nashville *Banner*, December 8, 1941.
2. *The Commercial Appeal*, January 1, 1942.
3. Nashville *Banner*, *Victory Edition*, May 7, 1945.
4. *The Commercial Appeal*, May 7, 1945.
5. Nashville *Banner*, August 6, 1945.
6. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1945.
7. *Ibid.*, August 6, 1945.
8. *Ibid.*, May 7, 1945.
9. *Ibid.*, May 7, 1945.
10. *The Commercial Appeal*, September 2, 1945.
11. *Ibid.*, September 2, 1945.
12. Nashville *Banner*, May 7, 1945.

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## CHAPTER XLIII

### *Tennessee in an Uneasy Peace*

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**W**ORLD WAR II did not leave the people of Tennessee in a state of shock nor did it dull their capacity for industrial, agricultural, and cultural progress. The returning veterans, unlike those of previous wars, found richer opportunities for employment and better educational facilities than the state boasted on the eve of war. Possibly the impetus that had been given to the citizens through four years of war effort carried over into the new period of uncertain peace. In spite of the threat of trouble with Russia, the deliverance of China into the hands of the Communists, and the rather constant disturbance in the Far and Middle East, the good people of the Volunteer State had the courage to build for the future.

*Population*—In the decade of the 1940's Tennessee had a healthy population growth, an increase from 2,915,841 in 1940 to 3,292,178 in 1950. This represented a growth of 12.9 per cent.<sup>1</sup> The University of Tennessee Bureau of Business Research estimates that the 1960 census will record for the state a population of 3,522,000.<sup>2</sup> The shift from rural to urban among the people that had developed in 1900 continued in 1950 when figures indicated that 38.4 per cent of the people lived in urban areas in 1950. This was an increase of 3.5 per cent in the urban population over 1940 census reports. In spite of this decided trend toward urbanization, the state continues to be rural with agriculture as the chief industry.

West Tennessee, because of the rapid growth of Memphis, will show the largest population gain of any section of the state. Estimates of the University Bureau indicate that the western section will increase by 100,000 persons, the eastern division by 70,000, and the central section by 50,000.<sup>3</sup>

*Agriculture*—Farming, as it has been since the admission of the state into the Union, continues to be the principal industry of the state, employing more workers than any other industry. However, by 1950 new industrial development was rapidly closing the gap between the number of farm workers and the number employed in non-agricultural work. The labor force employed in the state in 1950 numbered 1,135,646 and of this number 247,372 were engaged in farm pursuits.<sup>4</sup> Manufacturing ranked second with a work force of 239,427.<sup>5</sup>

Other thousands were engaged in transportation services, mining, building trades, professional and related services, and public transportation. The largest industry in the state was divided into 203,149 farms, with a majority of them ranging in size from one to nine acres, with only twenty-five farms of more than 1,000 acres.<sup>6</sup> This would indicate that Tennessee is not a plantation state. Cotton and corn are the chief crops grown in the state. Tennessee produced 419,000 bales of cotton in 1958 as compared to 510,000 bales in 1925.<sup>7</sup> The decrease in the amount produced is attributable to the acreage control now imposed by federal regulation. Corn has also decreased in the amount produced within the last three decades. In 1925 the state grew 63,240,000 bushels of corn and in 1958 59,748,000 bushels. Tobacco is the one great staple crop in the state that has increased in the amount produced within the past thirty years. In 1925 105,250,000 pounds of all types of tobacco were grown and in 1958 this figure had grown to 121,554,000 pounds. Because of acreage reduction in some crops the state has increased its production of hay and vegetables.

Even though Tennessee remains an agricultural state the percentage of acres in farms is showing a steady decrease. Sixty-six per cent of the total land area was in farms in 1954 as compared to 69.3 per cent in 1950 and 68.9 per cent in 1940.<sup>8</sup> This would indicate a gradual trend from agriculture as the chief industry of the state.

*Education Makes Progress*—School enrollments have shown a steady increase for the last two decades in Tennessee. In 1950 a total of 666,214 children were enrolled in the elementary and secondary schools of the state. This was an increase of almost 77,000 over the 1940 figures. Even more phenomenal is the growth indicated by the enrollment for the year 1957 when reports gave a figure of 771,662.<sup>9</sup> Of course, much of this increase is due to a steadily rising birth rate; however, there are indications that more and more of the eligible school population is in attendance and for a longer period of years than previously. The median year of schooling completed by persons from five to twenty-four years of age did not increase between the years from 1940 to 1950, remaining constant at six and one-tenth years. Later figures, if available, probably would indicate a substantial growth in this respect, for college enrollments have reflected a material increase for more than a decade. In 1949 the colleges and universities of the state, public and private, had an enrollment of 45,300, while in 1957 this figure had grown to 47,800. More significant is the fact that the projected enrollment for institutions of higher learning in 1974 is 113,900.<sup>10</sup> It is not only in enrollment that education has progressed in the state for legislative appropriations have materially increased since the close of World War II. The state has also built many new school buildings, libraries have been improved, and teaching supplies and aids have been provided to an extent hitherto unknown in Tennessee.



*Cities and Towns Grow*—Since 1900 the percentage of urban people in Tennessee has maintained a steady growth until in 1950 the figure had reached 38.4 per cent. Much of this growth in urban population represents a shifting of people from the rural areas to the cities. Predominately agricultural counties such as Fayette, Weakley, Moore, and Perry have suffered a loss in population in the last decade, while other counties such as Shelby, Hamilton, Knox, Davidson, and Anderson, have enjoyed substantial increases. The growth of cities has been most rapid. Memphis, the largest city in the state had a population of 396,000 in 1940 and the Chamber of Commerce, in 1959, estimated the population of Memphis at 535,000. Some of this growth may be attributed to the extension of the corporate limits so as to bring the town of Frayser into the city. However, a more substantial portion of its growth can be attributed to the coming to the city of an increasing number of industries such as the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, the International Harvester Corporation, the Grace Chemical Company, and the Kimberly-Clark Corporation. The location of the Millington Naval Base near the city has also contributed to its rapid growth.

Nashville, the state capital, has enjoyed a steady but less spectacular growth than Memphis. It is the second largest city and according to the 1950 census had a population of 174,307. Nashville is also developing as an industrial center. Chattanooga and Knoxville have maintained a steady growth in population and in industrial development.

The 1940 census report gives no indication of a future city at Oak Ridge, yet the same source in 1950 indicates a city of 30,229. This new urban center in Tennessee may be attributed to the building of the atomic bomb plant in this once beautiful Tennessee countryside. Smaller Tennessee cities have developed in the past two decades with cities like Clarksville, Jackson, Bristol, and Johnson City reporting material increases in population. There can be little doubt that the towns and cities have grown at the expense of the farm areas. Mechanized farming and the soil bank have served to lessen the labor requirements of the Tennessee farms, and young people have made their way to the towns and cities to find other employment.

Closely related to the shift in the total population from rural to urban areas is the migration of the Negro people. Within the past seventy years the Negroes have become much more mobile than they were in the years before 1890. This movement of the Negroes has been concentrated toward the cities. It is true that many Negroes have left the state to find employment and homes in the cities of the North. Nearly three-fourths of the Tennesseans living in Chicago in 1944 were Negroes. The same ratio holds true for Cleveland.<sup>11</sup> However, the net loss of non-white residents in Tennessee has not been great. This fact is explained by a large migration of Negroes to Tennessee. More than one-half of the Negro population in Memphis in 1930 was born outside the state. Mississippi gave to Memphis a number equal to almost eighty per cent of the

number who were born in Tennessee. A considerable number of Negroes have come to Memphis from Arkansas and other states.

By far the larger part of the population of Tennessee is native American and usually of Anglo-Saxon origin. In 1950 there were 13,846 persons of foreign birth residing in the state and of this number 63.1 per cent were naturalized citizens.<sup>12</sup> This represents only 0.4 per cent of the total population of the state as lacking citizenship. The foreign born residents are concentrated largely in the four major cities.

The median age of the Tennessean in 1950 was 27.3 years. Only 7.1 per cent of the people were sixty-five years or more old. The non-white portion of the population amounted to 16.1 per cent. The average household numbered 3.67 members.<sup>13</sup>

In 1949 some 928,185 Tennesseans reported to the United States government on their income. The median income of the Tennessean in that year was \$1,749, with the median income of the non-white Tennessean being \$1,106. More people fell into the less than \$500 per year group than into any other income bracket. This may be accounted for by the large number of people engaged in farm work. This bracket contained 164,895 persons, while only 13,910 persons in the state reported an income of \$10,000 or more.<sup>14</sup>

*New Problems in Tennessee*—The growth of the state and the shifting of large numbers of people from rural to urban centers has raised new and perplexing problems to the people of the state and to the various governmental agencies. Among the most serious problems confronting the state is the problem of racial integration. The Supreme Court in May, 1954, ordered public supported schools integrated. This decision found the people of the state unprepared for such new departures. However, progress has been made toward the integration of the public schools, with the high school in Clinton, the elementary schools in Nashville, and the state-supported institutions of higher learning being partly integrated. Other institutions have not made so much progress in this respect. The Negro segment of the population of Memphis and Nashville are now insistent that other phases of community activities be open to the members of that race. Nashville, Chattanooga, and Memphis have recently witnessed a series of "sit-in" demonstrations by youthful Negroes. The lunch counters of variety stores in the three cities have been asked to serve Negro patrons. They have refused to do so and the police have been summoned to haul the participants away to jail.<sup>15</sup> This situation is as yet unsolved as the stores closed their lunch counters rather than serve Negro patrons. A citizen's committee has been trying to arrive at a satisfactory solution to the Nashville situation but has not yet devised a suitable plan.<sup>16</sup>

City officials in Memphis have recently been confronted with "sit-in" de-

monstrations by young Negro college students in the public libraries and in the city operated art gallery. The demonstrators were denied the use of these facilities and the police were called. More than forty of the participants were hustled away to jail on charges of threatened breach of the peace, loitering, and disorderly conduct. Hailed before City Judge Beverly Boushe, they were each fined on charges of disorderly conduct. The Negro population retaliated with a second day of demonstrating and again the police carted them to jail on the same charges that had been lodged against the first offenders. This time counsel for the offenders asked for a two-week moratorium on "sit-ins" and a similar delay in trial. The judge granted it and a conference resulted between attorneys for the young people and the members of the city commission. The conference produced no tangible results as the irate members of the commission took the position that the city would not yield in the face of threats.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, a Citizens Commission on Human Relations, under the chairmanship of the Reverend Paul Tudor Jones, liberal pastor of the fashionable Idlewild Presbyterian Church, met with the members of the commission but with no predictable results. The library, the art gallery, and the public parks in Memphis remain segregated and there appears to be no immediate break in the situation for the near future.

It is worthy of note that few rural communities in the state have been confronted with the racial problem to the extent that it has faced the cities. This is probably due to the fact that better police protection prevails in the metropolitan centers and that Negro leaders in the cities are more aggressive and better educated. However, in Fayette and Haywood counties the Negroes have been attempting to register in preparation for forthcoming elections. The election commissions in these counties have resigned in the face of rising complaints by the would-be registrants that they have been denied their constitutional rights.<sup>18</sup> The great majority of the people of the state have accepted the racial controversy quietly. A number of citizens have expressed their opinions through the letters to the editor medium of the daily papers.<sup>19</sup> These letters, while thoroughly expressing the prejudices of many people, have been quiet in tone and none of them have been a call to violent resistance of the court decisions.

Juvenile delinquency is yet another great problem facing the people of the state. Authorities on this subject claim that within the past ten years delinquency among children has increased 100 per cent, which means that one out of every twenty-nine children of school age will find their way into court within the next year.<sup>20</sup> This is due to lack of restraint on children, lack of work opportunities for them, and lack of good recreational facilities, in the opinion of authorities in the field.<sup>21</sup> This problem, in Tennessee, is confined largely to the cities where the ever-increasing population has outstripped the ability of agencies of local government to provide necessary facilities for boys and girls. There is now being given consideration to the lengthening of the school term



in the state so as to occupy the time and energy of the young people. More and more churches are establishing recreation centers for the members of their congregations. The four major cities are rapidly expanding their park facilities and their swimming pools in an effort to occupy the time of the children. Nevertheless, the juvenile courts in the state remain inadequate and the schools of correction continue to be overcrowded.

Traffic control has become a major problem in the four large cities of the state. Memphis and Nashville are now building perimeter express ways which are designed to keep through traffic off the busy streets of the down town area. Slow progress has been made, notably in Memphis, in this direction and the traffic problem remains unsolved. The number of cars in use on city streets is constantly increasing. Shelby County issued license tags to 10,000 more automobiles in 1960 than were issued in 1959. The streets, however, remain virtually unchanged. Federal, state, and municipal governments are cooperating in an effort to solve the traffic problem of the large cities.

Local governments are striving mightily to meet the booming enrollments in the public schools. However, children of school age are appearing more rapidly than school buildings can be constructed. Memphis has spent \$16,000,000 on new school buildings within the past three years. Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga have also spent great sums on new buildings and additions to existing buildings. Meanwhile, the birth rate, although showing a slight decline, remains high; 84,415 children were born in the state in 1958, a decrease of less than 1,000 over the year previous. Therefore, indications are that the problem of adequate educational facilities will be with the people of the state for several years.

Tennessee continues to operate with what might be termed an antiquated tax structure. An income tax is unconstitutional in the state. Therefore, different sessions of the general assembly have searched for revenues and have been susceptible to pressure groups in determining what sources of revenue should be developed. For many years the state levied an ad valorem tax on property but this levy was abandoned with the advent of the sales tax. The three per cent sales tax produces more revenue for the state than any other tax. In addition to the sales tax the state levies a tobacco tax, a tax on alcoholic liquors, a heavy gasoline tax, and innumerable fees. These revenues have not been adequate for building and maintaining a satisfactory system of highways, or for developing the best possible educational system. In spite of the conditions that exist in the state, virtually every candidate for the legislature or for the governorship stands for office on a platform of no new taxes. This political idiosyncrasy on the part of the people of the state is costing in educational progress and in the general development of the state. The rising tide of population is not relieving the problem but is bringing it into sharper focus. The problem of designing an adequate tax structure continues to confront Tennesseans, who, no

doubt, in their own good time will make the changes in the constitution that will make possible a feasible tax structure.

A growing number of citizens seem to be aware of the many problems confronting the state as the census of 1960 gets under way.<sup>22</sup> This census report will probably point up some of these problems in the minds of the people. Confronting and solving problems are not new to the people of the Volunteer state. They have twice adopted new constitutions, in 1834 and again in 1870. They have marched to war on five different occasions. They faced with courage the problem of reconstruction in the years following the Civil War. They survived with courage the great depression of this century. There is every reason to believe that they will face the currently existing problems, courageously devoting their talents and abilities to finding a satisfactory solution to these problems.

#### CHAPTER XLIII—NOTES

1. *Seventeenth Census, 1950, Population, II, Pt. 42, p. 8.*
2. *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, March 30, 1960.
3. *Ibid.*, March 30, 1960.
4. *Seventeenth Census, 1950, Population, II, Pt. 42, p. 44.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, 7.
7. *The World Almanac for 1960* (New York, 1960), 692.
8. *Census.*
9. *Public Higher Education in Tennessee: A Report to the Education Survey Subcommittee of The Tennessee Legislative Council* (Nashville, 1957), 27.
10. *Ibid.*
11. John Ballenger Knox, *The People of Tennessee*. (Knoxville, 1960), 79.
12. *Seventeenth Census, 1950, Population, II, Pt. 42, p. 42.*
13. *Ibid.*, 35.
14. *Ibid.*, 50.
15. *The Commercial Appeal*, March 30, 1960.
16. *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, April 5, 1960. Since the above was written, a few lunch counters in Nashville, Knoxville (also following "sit-in" demonstrations), and Chattanooga were opened to Negroes.
17. *The Commercial Appeal*, March 31, 1960.
18. *The Commercial Appeal*, March 27, 1960. When later permitted to register, the Negroes who did so charged that they were subjected to economic reprisals.
19. *Ibid.*, April 3, 1960.
20. *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, April 5, 1960.
21. *Ibid.*

22. According to preliminary figures released on June 16, the state's population in 1960 is 3,543,806 as compared with 3,289,435 in 1950. The ten most populous cities are:

	1950	1960		1950	1960
Memphis	396,000	495,039	Jackson	30,207	33,642
Nashville	176,170	167,340	Oak Ridge	30,229	27,009
Chattanooga	130,941	128,737	Kingsport	19,571	25,917
Knoxville	124,769	110,089	Morristown	13,019	21,115
Johnson City	27,864	34,401	Clarksville	17,695	20,880



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## CHAPTER XLIV

### *Politics, 1920-1958*

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NOT SINCE THE DAYS when the embattled Whigs trained their largest guns on Andrew Jackson have Tennesseans witnessed such a variety of political activities as has characterized the almost four decades from 1920 through 1958. This period has witnessed the election of one Republican governor, the granting of women the privilege of voting, the birth and death of fusion, the candidacy of independents, the rise of city political bosses and a growing struggle between the urban voters and the rural voters.

It is probable that many of these lusty battles have been the by-products of the mounting feeling among urban voters that the state government has been operated by and for the benefit of the rural people. In spite of the fact that women were given the right to vote in 1920 and that political rivalries were growing, the percentage of eligibles who exercised the right of ballot failed to increase. Sixty per cent of the eligible voters went to the polls in 1916, but in 1920, the first year in which the women voted, only forty-six per cent of the potential voters availed themselves of the opportunity. This percentage declined to a somewhat apathetic twenty-seven per cent in 1940.<sup>1</sup>

*A Republican Landslide*—The Democratic primary of August, 1920, brought about the nomination of Governor Albert H. Roberts for a second term without major opposition. The Republican candidate was Alfred A. Taylor, a brother of the genial and popular Robert Love Taylor. It was not the first time that Alfred A. Taylor had received the nomination of his party, for he had been defeated by his brother in the famous "War of the Roses" campaign of 1886. Now, thirty-four years later, the old Republican warrior was again called to the party colors. This time the veteran campaigner was to be rewarded with a smashing victory over Governor Roberts. Possibly this Republican victory in the gubernatorial race was due to the national Republican landslide of that year but the fact remains that Taylor polled 229,143 votes to Harding's 219,829.<sup>2</sup> The magic and romance of the name Taylor seems to have been chiefly responsible for the victory of Alfred A. Taylor. The new governor found himself handicapped by a Democratic general assembly but he recommended sound legislation to that body and thereby was able to accomplish much good for the state. Schools and institutions made progress under the grand old warrior of the Taylor clan.

*The Democrats Regain Control*—Tennessee is traditionally a Democratic state and the election of 1922 restored the office of governor to the Democratic party. Austin Peay, Clarksville attorney and former candidate for the nomination, was selected by his party to oppose the reelection of Governor Taylor. He won a hard fought victory over the doughty Governor in the general election.

The Clarksville attorney became one of the most popular and successful governors in the history of the state. Governor Peay turned his attention to a reorganization of the state government. His reorganization bill consolidated the sixty-four bureaus, commissions, and boards then administering most of the business of the state into eight new departments; namely, finance and taxation, insurance and banking, agriculture, education, highways, institutions, public health, and labor. These departments of government have not been greatly changed in the intervening years. A second measure of the first Peay administration was the levying of a gasoline tax of two cents per gallon for the building of a system of good roads.<sup>3</sup>

John R. Neal, brilliant but eccentric Tennessee lawyer, opposed Peay in the Democratic primary of 1922 but went down to defeat by almost 100,000 votes. The incumbent did not take the stump against Neal but placed his case before the voters with a reelection announcement. Captain T. F. Peck, Etowah, was the Republican opponent of the Governor in the general election. Peay won by 44,000 majority.<sup>4</sup>

The Sixty-fourth general assembly was not as responsive to the leadership of the tireless Governor as had been the preceding assembly. The fight came over the tobacco tax which the Governor championed for the benefit of the public schools.

*Edward Hull Crump Enters the State Political Arena*—Mr. Crump, as he was known by his political followers in Memphis and Shelby County, had long been the strongest political force in Memphis. He had served as mayor of Memphis and following his removal from that office had assumed the role of political boss of Memphis without portfolio. Boss Crump was a successful business man who had assumed the role of benevolent dictator in political affairs in Memphis and Shelby County. Prior to 1926 he had indicated little desire to engage in state politics, but it is evident that he felt that the gasoline tax and the tobacco tax had operated for the advantage of the rural counties as opposed to the growing urban centers.

The stage was set when Governor Peay, on January 1, 1926, asked the people of Tennessee if he should offer for a third term as governor. No governor since the Civil War had been elected to a third term. Peay was asking the people to support him in breaking a precedent of six decades. The response to the Peay request was sufficiently strong to cause him to announce his candidacy. Hill McAlister, who had served many years as state treasurer, was the chief opponent



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—E. H. Crump Stadium*

of the Governor in the Democratic primary. Mr. Crump threw his support to McAlister, thereby opening the long struggle of the Shelby political leader for political control of the state. The tobacco tax was the main issue, for it had been enacted originally for a two year period and must be enacted again if the public schools of the state were to continue their progress. Peay had the support of Luke Lea, World War I hero and a former United States Senator. Consequently the campaign became one of personalities as well as issues. Crump professed to see evil in the Peay-Lea combine, and they replied with the charge that Crump wanted to dominate the state for the benefit of the urban centers. Peay won by the narrow margin of 8,000 votes.<sup>5</sup> Walter White, Superintendent of Rhea County Schools, was the Republican nominee in the general election. White was no match for the Democratic nominee and lost by an almost two-to-one ratio.<sup>6</sup> Peay had advocated that the tobacco tax be made a permanent part of the revenue policy of the state and the assembly lost little time in carrying out his wishes. The highway system was further improved and \$1,000,000 was made available for



the building of rural schools. The energetic Peay had achieved most of the things that he had advocated in his campaigns, when on October 2, 1927, the people of the state were shocked by the news of the sudden death of the Governor. Henry Horton, speaker of the senate, became governor. He announced that he would continue the policies of the late Governor Peay.

*Crump Continues His Active Role in the State Politics*—The new governor's avowed intention to continue the Peay policies did nothing to win the political friendship of E. H. Crump or other urban political leaders. The leaders of the large cities, notably Memphis and Nashville, felt that their fellow citizens were paying taxes for the benefit of the rural counties. Therefore, when Hill McAlister announced that he would oppose Horton in the 1928 primary, Mister Crump hastened to announce his support of the state treasurer. Crump made the issue the influence of Luke Lea in the governor's office. Lewis S. Pope, former state commissioner of institutions, was the third candidate in the campaign. Pope waged an aggressive but hopeless campaign against McAlister and Horton. The fight between the two leaders was a bitter one, with Horton winning by a margin of less than 6,000 votes. This was the first big vote from Shelby County, with McAlister receiving 24,069 votes and Horton getting 3,693 votes.<sup>7</sup> McAlister also carried Davidson County by a vote of 11,325 to 4,417.<sup>8</sup> It was becoming evident that the urban citizens were making common cause against the rural areas.

In his first term in his own right Horton set to work for improved roads and schools. A failing effort was made to pass an income tax as a privilege tax. The Tennessee constitution does not provide for a state income tax. However, the forces of E. H. Crump appeared temporarily to be more kindly disposed toward the state administration. L. E. Gwinn, Memphis and Covington attorney, locked horns with the Governor in the 1930 primary. Gwinn was not without political experience and he was not an unknown in state politics. He had waged a vigorous campaign for the gubernatorial nomination in the primary of 1922 and he had served Tipton County in the general assembly. His attacks on Horton were based on extravagance in state government and on the close association of the incumbent with Luke Lea. Gwynn charged that all was not well in state fiscal affairs, but the effects of the depression that had started in late 1929 had not yet brought about the collapse of a sufficient number of financial institutions in the state to materially influence the primary vote. Horton was nominated by a vote of 144,990 to 101,285 for his opponent.<sup>9</sup> The Republicans nominated C. Arthur Bruce, Memphis lumber executive, to oppose the Governor in the November election. Bruce waged a vigorous campaign, charging chaos in state finances and promising a business administration if elected. The voters of Tennessee, however, did not break from the old tradition of voting for the Democratic nominee and Horton was reelected by a majority of nearly 70,000.<sup>10</sup>

The Memphis *Commercial Appeal* editorially hailed the return of Horton

to office with the comment: "The vote of confidence will give him renewed enthusiasms for honest and conscientious service. The State will profit immensely by its wisdom."<sup>11</sup>

On November 8, 1930, the Bank of Tennessee in Nashville went into the hands of a receiver. Five days later, the Holston Union Bank in Knoxville closed its doors, and the following day Caldwell and Company was taken in charge by a receiver.<sup>12</sup> These institutions were owned and controlled by Luke Lea and Rogers Caldwell, supporters and advisers of Governor Horton. It soon became known that millions of dollars of state funds were deposited in the closed institutions. The unhappy governor, on November 23, issued a statement denying all of the rumors that were being circulated about the condition of state finances.<sup>13</sup> However, the *Chattanooga Times*, on December 4, editorially demanded a thorough and complete investigation, with possible impeachment of guilty officials.<sup>14</sup> Other newspapers took up the hue and cry against Horton.

As the hour approached for the convening of the general assembly of 1931, it became evident that the enemies of Governor Horton would seek his removal from office. The early fight in the legislature was over the organization of the Senate, because the presiding officer of that body would become governor if Horton should be removed. W. K. Abernathy, veteran Selmer legislator, was the leading candidate and the choice of the administration. Abernathy was opposed by A. B. Broadbent of Clarksville, Hu Anderson of Jackson, Scott Fitzhugh of Memphis, and Charles Cornelius of Nashville. Fitzhugh was the candidate of the Crump organization, and on the first ballot in the Democratic caucus received only three votes while the Horton candidate, Abernathy, was the high candidate with ten votes. Abernathy withdrew in favor of Fitzhugh on January 7, when it became evident that he could not win. Thus, the Crump forces had won the initial victory.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the house of representatives had organized with little difficulty by the election of Walter M. "Pete" Haynes, Winchester, as speaker.

Governor Horton, on January 8, in an address to a joint session of the general assembly, called for a "thorough, honest, and searching investigation of state affairs, beginning with the office of governor and going all the way down the line." He demanded no political investigation, no whitewash, and no persecution.<sup>16</sup>

*Charges Are Brought Against Horton*—From its opening meeting to its adjournment the 1931 session of the general assembly was filled with fire and brimstone. The friends and opponents of the governor vied with each other in attacking and defending the chief executive. Speaker Haynes, on January 14, announced the appointment of a committee to investigate the charges against Horton. Walter Faulkner, veteran Lebanon legislator, was named chairman of the group. The assembly recessed to await the report of its committee, but the atmosphere around the capitol building remained charged with

suspicion and invective. The investigation dragged on through the winter days, and finally a committee was appointed to look into the work of the Faulkner committee and bring in recommendations.

E. H. Crump arrived in Nashville on March 4 for conferences with political friends. The colorful Crump was a master of political invective and he lost no time in attacking the weary Governor. "The governor of our state, Henry H. Horton, set in his office, supine and docile, and easy prey for designing, selfish interests, gougers in the taxpayer's money . . . ." Mr. Crump also took the opportunity to pronounce John Nolan, state treasurer, unfit. He said of the state comptroller, "Edgar Graham says nothing, does nothing—deaf, dumb, blind."<sup>17</sup>

Governor Horton may have been weary but he did not remain silent. He quickly termed Crump an "impudent political boss." He further said, "I shall not resign, I will stand, answer, and fight until the end."<sup>18</sup> The Governor was not through and having found his voice he hastened to characterize the Memphis political leader, "Mr. E. H. Crump, the political purist, and loud-shouting moral uplifter, has come to Nashville with his usual bodyguard and issued his manifesto."<sup>19</sup>

The newspapers were having a festive holiday. The Nashville *Tennessean*, at the moment still in possession of Luke Lea, was stoutly defending Horton. The Memphis *Press-Scimitar* and the Nashville *Banner* were wielding editorial sledge hammers against the Governor. The press was publicizing the best political fight in the history of the state since the Patterson-Carmack brawls of earlier in the century. Meanwhile, the friends and enemies of the Governor were struggling for power and control. The lines were tightly drawn when the second committee recommended to the house of representatives that the Governor be impeached on eight charges.

Meanwhile the friends of Horton had let it be known that Crump was seeking the ouster of the Governor in order to place his protégé, Senate Speaker Scott Fitzhugh, in the executive office and thereby extend his political control over the state. It was to refute this rumor that Fitzhugh, on May 30, resigned his speakership and resumed his seat on the floor of the upper chamber. He was the first senate speaker in the history of the state to do so.<sup>20</sup> A. B. Broadbent was elected to the vacant post. Broadbent, as an early political disciple of the late Austin Peay, was friendly to the Lea-Horton interests. The Nashville *Tennessean* chortled in high glee, "Crump is in a coffin with a lily in his hand."<sup>21</sup> If the politicians believed that the possibility of placing Broadbent in the governor's office would wean support away from Horton, they were doomed to disappointment. The day following the election of Broadbent, formal charges were placed against the fighting Horton. Most important among these charges was the alleged conspiracy with Luke Lea and Rogers Caldwell to permit the use of state funds for individual profit and official neglect of duty. The vote to impeach would be on the first charge and would represent a test of strength between the warring factions of the state. The eve of the vote witnessed much maneuvering for



votes by both sides. The roll was called on June 5, and the Governor was sustained by a vote of 58 to 41. The defeat of the Crump forces on this roll call served to bring about a dropping of the remaining articles by a vote of 56 to 40 on June 9.<sup>22</sup> Thus ended the first attempt in the history of the Volunteer State to remove a chief executive. Mr. Crump returned to Memphis to regroup his forces for the 1932 election, and the weary but pleased governor served the remainder of his term with a proud dignity.

*Political War Comes to Tennessee*—Horton declined to offer for a third term, and Hill McAlister, twice defeated for the highest office in the state, announced as an anti-administration candidate for the office of governor. Lewis S. Pope, Pikeville attorney and former commissioner of institutions, tossed his hat into the ring. It soon became evident that neither of the candidates fitted the needs of the administration, so ex-Governor Malcolm R. Patterson, entered the primary as the administration candidate. The candidates discussed the finances of the state, economy and tax reduction, and the desirability of bringing about the punishment of Luke Lea and Rogers Caldwell as issues before the voters. Pope adopted as his slogan "Lewis S. Pope the tax payer's hope" and caught an immediate response from the people of the rural areas. Hill McAlister had the support of the strong Crump organization plus the support of the statewide organization of Senator Kenneth McKellar. Patterson was too old for a rigorous campaign and he had lost much of the oratorical fire of earlier years, and did not gain too much support. McAlister received 116,020 votes, Pope 106,450, and Patterson 58,915. It was the heavy McAlister majority in Shelby County that gave him the close victory. Pope immediately charged fraud and announced that he would contest the result before the Democratic State Committee.<sup>23</sup> The defeated candidate then made a series of pre-contest speeches over the state in which he outlined and discussed his charges of fraud. The committee, however, overwhelmingly sustained McAlister as the party nominee, and the disappointed Pope announced his candidacy as an independent in the November election. The Republicans, sensing a golden opportunity to elect a governor, nominated John E. McCall of Memphis. The Republican nominee lacked the strong support of many members of his party. The three candidates waged a vigorous campaign and the Democratic cry became "vote regular." Pope was charged with bolting the party and McCall was said to be a political unknown. The Democratic candidate led his nearest opponent, McCall, by more than 45,000 votes. Pope had to be content with third place in this race. Thus Hill McAlister after two defeats had achieved the highest office in the state.

*Economy in Government; Fusion in Politics*—Governor McAlister found the state treasury depleted in finances, the state behind in the payment to the counties of their school funds, and the state bonds unsalable in the money markets. The general assembly convened and started trying to determine

a state appropriation bill for the next two years. The cry for economy resounded throughout the state, with legislators and governor responding with a pledge of rigid economy. The lawmakers soon found themselves hopelessly ensnarled in a web of financial uncertainty. They decided to leave recommendations to a recess committee and go home while the committee worked out the details of an appropriation bill. Meanwhile, the state funding board was attempting to sell \$10,000,000 worth of bonds to pay the public school teachers their past due salaries. The recess committee brought in a budget that cut state appropriations to the bone. This budget temporarily threatened the closing of the state colleges. However, cooler heads prevailed and the colleges continued in operation on a pauper budget. All state appropriations were drastically reduced in the budget adopted by the harassed legislators.

There was never any doubt that Governor McAlister would run for a second term nor that Lewis S. Pope would take the field against him. The Democratic primary of 1934 was a bitter one with the political ghost of Luke Lea hovering over the state. Pope again raised the old cry of fraud and made E. H. Crump the target of many of his political darts. McAlister and Crump charged that Pope was the candidate of the once powerful Luke Lea. The situation was further complicated by the candidacy of Gordon Browning, who had been congressman from the seventh district for twelve years, against Senator Nathan Bachman. McAlister defeated his challenger by more than 55,000 votes while Browning lost a close race to Senator Bachman. Pope again raised the cry of fraud in Shelby County, which had returned a smashing majority for the governor.

Pope and the leadership of the Republican party worked out a deal whereby Pope, running as an independent Democrat, would be declared the Republican nominee. Thus for the first time since the days of former Governor Ben Hooper, fusion had returned to the Tennessee political scene. McAlister and the leaders of his party waged an aggressive campaign which brought about the reelection of the Governor by more than 70,000 votes. Fusion had failed in its second try in the state.

Chaos came to the general assembly in the 1935 session. The administration, with the support of the growing school forces, sponsored a general sales tax. The powerful Shelby delegation took up the cudgels against this tax and the fight was on. The economy bloc came forward again and forced a recess in the legislature. When this body reconvened the fight was renewed and the session lasted its constitutional limit of 75 days without passing an appropriation bill. A special session was inevitable, and at the call of the governor, such a session opened on July 15. Finally, a weary legislature and a tired Governor agreed to reenact the appropriation bill of 1933.

Much of the preliminary work for the gubernatorial election of 1936 was done in the two sessions of the 1935 general assembly. It was evident that the powerful Shelby County machine had reached the parting of the ways with

Hill McAlister. This separation had come over the sales tax and the desire of the Memphis machine for legalized liquor in Tennessee. The Eighteenth Amendment had been repealed and the large cities wanted the legal sale of alcoholic beverages. McAlister had bid for the rural vote on a dry platform and was unwilling to give in to Crump on the question. Nevertheless, the Governor had a formidable state organization and there had been no break with the powerful Senator Kenneth McKellar. Therefore, it was certain that the state administration and McKellar would have a candidate in the Democratic primary. Burgin E. Dossett, Superintendent of Campbell County Schools and former campaign manager for Governor McAlister, became the candidate of the state administration and the McKellar organization. Boss Crump maintained a discreet silence concerning his choice for the office. Gordon Browning, popular World War I veteran, who had carefully refrained from adversely criticizing Crump in the 1934 senatorial campaign, announced his candidacy. It soon became evident that the former congressman had strong support throughout the state. Many of his comrades of army service took up campaigning in his behalf. Ten days before the primary, Crump broke his silence with a ringing endorsement of the popular Browning. Whatever hopes the Dossett-McKellar-McAlister combine had for victory flew out the window with the Crump announcement. Browning defeated the able young educator by more than 100,000 votes. It is possible that Crump had lost sight of the fact that Browning had served in the army with Luke Lea. Republican opposition to Browning was minor in the November election.

*A Break Between Browning and Crump is Foretold*—An early administration-supported bill in the 1937 general assembly contained the germ of a future misunderstanding between Browning and Crump. The bill provided for an increase in the number of departments of state government. A Department of Administration was created and Wallace Edwards, friend of Luke Lea and Henry Horton, was appointed to this post. Crump was none too well pleased with this appointment, but said little for public consumption.<sup>24</sup> Later in the legislative session, the post of back tax collector was created and Browning appointed Lewis S. Pope to this office. Pope had long been a bitter opponent of the spectacular political boss of Shelby County. Again, Crump issued no public statement concerning the appointment of his bitter critic.

Browning came to Memphis on May 3, 1937, and held a conference with "Mister" Crump in the latter's office. Neither man made a statement to the press that was indicative of an impending break. The long hot summer, however, was filled with rumors of a break between the two strong leaders. Political observers appeared to be confident that all was not well between the boss and the Governor. This was borne out on September 29, when Crump in an interview with Joe Hatcher, astute political columnist for the Nashville *Tennessean*, indicated that Browning was not pleasing him as governor. The Shelby leader further voiced his dissatisfaction over the appointment of Pope as back tax collector.<sup>25</sup>



Browning obviously was expecting a break with the Memphis political giant, for the Nashville *Tennessean*, October 2, reported that the Browning lieutenants had started a poll of the members of the legislature relative to the passing of a county unit bill in Tennessee elections. Crump, in a strong statement, termed the plan political suicide. Hilary Howse, Mayor of Nashville, also announced his opposition to such a scheme.<sup>26</sup> One day later the *Tennessean* predicted a special session of the general assembly.<sup>27</sup> Senate Speaker Byron Pope and House Speaker Walter M. Haynes arrived in Nashville to confer with the Governor concerning such a session. Events moved rapidly thereafter and the lines were soon sharply drawn between the two factions. Watkins Overton, Mayor of Memphis, announced that he would go on a state-wide radio broadcast in opposition to the proposed unit plan. The embattled Governor announced his plans to reply to Overton and charged that Crump had asked him for an appointment to the United States Senate on the death of Senator Bachman. Crump quickly denied the charge.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, the Governor had set the date for the special session as October 11. It soon appeared evident that the Governor was in control of the general assembly and that the unit bill would pass. Frank Rice, the legislative adviser to the Crump organization, strongly condemned Browning for using patronage to influence the members of the legislature. Browning charged Rice with being a poor loser and on October 15 the senate passed the unit bill by a vote of twenty to thirteen. Senator Kenneth McKellar then came to Nashville to address the house of representatives in opposition to the unit plan. The Senator's impassioned speech was in vain for on October 20 the house of representatives in a stormy session passed the unit bill by a seven vote majority.<sup>29</sup> The Crump organization promised to test the constitutionality of the new plan before the supreme court of the state.\*

Mayor Overton, on October 11, had announced that he expected a purge of the Shelby County registration lists. Browning brought about the passage of a bill enlarging the state election commission so as to give him control of the commission, and it was announced that the Shelby lists would be purged of fraudulently registered voters.<sup>30</sup> It had long been charged over the state that dead people were registered to vote in Shelby County. A state crime commission was also created to study crime.

*Crump Regains Control*—The Shelby County political organization instituted a suit attacking the constitutionality of the new unit law. This suit went to the highest court in the state which by a majority vote decided the law was in conflict with the constitution.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the gubernatorial primary was to be conducted in the customary manner. Walter Chandler, a member of

\* The Tennessee unit plan was similar to that employed in the state of Georgia. Each county would be given a certain number of votes in each election. The plan was designed to balance the huge majorities from Shelby County and to give the counties more influence in state elections.

Congress from the ninth district, announced as a candidate against his old comrade in arms, the Governor. He was the first Crump candidate, but withdrew when Prentice Cooper, a member of the state senate from Shelbyville, announced his candidacy. Browning was an able speaker as well as a veteran campaigner. He took the stump in the apparent hope that Cooper would attempt to match his oratory. Cooper, however, made few speeches and contented himself with traveling over the state shaking hands with people, and issuing statements through the press. The young candidate waged a smooth and skillful campaign against the aggressive Governor. The issues were basically Crump and Luke Lea. Lea was home from a term in the North Carolina prison and although he took no public part in the campaign it was generally believed that he was on the Governor's side. It was in this campaign that Crump displayed his skill at writing political advertisements. A full page advertisement in newspapers termed the governor "the type of man who would milk his neighbor's cow through a hole in the fence." Another such advertisement likened the governor to Judas Iscariot. The people enjoyed the campaign, and national magazines came to the proud old Volunteer State to write about its family political fury. Shelby County reversed its vote of two years previously and gave Cooper a resounding majority over the incumbent. Other counties followed the lead of Shelby and Browning went down in overwhelming defeat. The Huntingdon lawyer had served his state only two years as governor, but in that time had materially improved the condition of the public schools and brought the state budget into balance as well as refinancing the state's large debt and placing it on an orderly retirement plan. If his political sagacity had matched his other accomplishments his career in state affairs might have been of more lasting duration.

The defeat of the fiery Browning was largely due to his advocacy of the unpopular unit plan and his desperate attempts to rally the voters to him. He had threatened to send state troops to Shelby County for the purpose of supervising the election. Tennesseans were not in sympathy with such measures.

*Calm Returns to the State*—The new administration came to power in an atmosphere of harmony. Crump was apparently pleased with Cooper and the young Shelbyville governor displayed no disposition to bring about conflict with the powerful Shelby leader. The school program, as instituted by Browning, was continued, the state budget remained in balance, and the state bond financing plan was not disturbed. Shelby County was awarded its share of state patronage and all was harmony in political affairs. Tom Stewart had been elected to the United States Senate in a close contest with Edward W. Carmack, Jr. Cooper was elected for a second term in 1940 with only token opposition, and the dove of peace appeared to have settled over Tennessee political affairs.

Three brief flurries containing elements of political strife threatened the tenure of Governor Cooper. However, the threats subsided without major



(Courtesy Southern Railway System)

*Chattanooga—Citico Yard, Southern Railway System, the newest and most efficient in Freight Yard Classification Methods*

trouble. The Governor vetoed a bill calling for the legal sale of liquor in the state but the legislature promptly passed the measure over the veto.

The Tennessee Education Association sought the passage of a bill increasing the public school appropriation by \$1,827,000. The Governor opposed and for a time it appeared that open warfare would come between the chief executive and the powerful school forces. The Governor won a victory when the powerful Crump declared his opposition to a sales tax.<sup>32</sup>

The third issue was over the repeal of the poll tax. A bill was introduced to repeal this measure as a requirement for voting. The bill was defeated in the upper house when the strong Shelby delegation announced its opposition to repeal.<sup>33</sup>

Governor Cooper was elected for a third term in 1942 when he defeated former Representative Ridley Mitchell for the nomination. World War II had become a reality for the people of the Volunteer State and much of the Gover-



nor's energy in his third term was devoted to placing the state on a war footing. His work was of the highest order in this great effort.

*McCord and the Sales Tax*—Jim Nance McCord, popular congressman from Lewisburg, won the Democratic nomination in 1944 with little opposition. The new governor was a man of boundless energy, a popular speaker, and a well-known auctioneer. He was destined to become a staunch friend of the public schools. Perhaps, the greatest accomplishment of his first term was a material increase in appropriations for the public schools.

Former Governor Gordon Browning had returned to the army early in World War II. He had been elected to the chancellorship of his home district but had been relatively inactive in politics since leaving the governor's office. At the time of the Democratic primary of 1946, he was on duty in Germany. His friends qualified him in the governor's race and although virtually no campaign was waged for him, he polled more than 120,000 votes. It was apparent that the former Governor had regained his once magic touch in state politics.

Chaotic conditions prevailed in the public schools of the state by the time the 1947 general assembly convened. Teachers were poorly paid and many were leaving the profession for more lucrative positions. The *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, under the by-line of its star reporter, Robert Talley, was calling for new taxes for the schools. Other newspapers took up the cry, and it soon became evident that the administration would recommend a general sales tax to the legislature. Crump and his Shelby cohorts did not endorse the sales tax but refrained from opposing it. Therefore, it passed and the genial Jim McCord had earned a place as one of the strongest friends of education in the history of the state. Also, at the behest of the education-minded governor a state retirement system for the teachers was enacted into law.

Crump had warned that the sales tax might be political suicide, but McCord evidently felt so strongly that the schools needed it that he took the calculated risk. Gordon Browning was out of the army in 1946 and opposed Governor McCord in the primary of 1948. The glamor of his second distinguished war record, plus some unfavorable reaction to the sales tax, enabled Browning once again to achieve the chief executive's post by a heavy majority. This primary marked the decline of the Crump influence in state politics. The Memphis leader strongly opposed the former Governor but was unable to give McCord the usual heavy majority in Shelby County.

This gubernatorial campaign may have been complicated by a spirited three man contest for the Senate. Mr. Crump had announced early that he would not support Senator Tom Stewart for reelection. Representative Estes Kefauver announced as a candidate and was joined in the race by Judge John Mitchell of Cookeville. Mitchell was the Crump choice. Kefauver waged a spirited campaign and developed the ability to turn the famed Crump advertisements to his own

advantage. Crump, in a political advertisement, had compared Kefauver to a pet coon. The tall Tennessean quipped that he might be a pet coon but that he was not the pet coon of E. H. Crump. The Kefauver campaign captured the imagination of the voters and he won a close race from Stewart, with Mitchell running a rather poor third. The Crump dynasty had been broken by Kefauver and Browning.

Many political observers expected Browning to wage war on the Crump organization, because of the bitter fight that had occurred in previous years. However, such was not to be for the new governor gave no indication of renewing the once fierce struggle. He concentrated his attention on improving education and other departments of the state government. Nevertheless, Clifford Allen, member of the senate from Nashville, opposed the Governor for reelection and ran a surprisingly strong race.

Politics soon became important in the second Browning administration. The purchase of the Memorial Apartment Hotel caused cries of waste, extravagance, and fraud. It soon became evident that Browning would have strong opposition in 1952.

Frank G. Clement, Dickson attorney and former commander of the state American Legion, announced, and soon loomed as a formidable opponent for the incumbent. Clifford Allen decided early to have a second fling at the contest for the governorship. Clifford Pierce, prominent Memphis attorney, also announced as a candidate.

As the campaign progressed it soon became evident that Clement was the chief opponent of the Governor. Clement was young, an able campaigner, and one of the most fluent orators in the history of the state. Browning had supported the failing effort of Estes Kefauver to secure the Democratic nomination for the presidency. Kefauver, by his stand on the loyalty oath at the National Convention, had offended some Tennessee voters. Though the able and popular Senator publicly raised his voice in defense of Browning, Clement won a decisive victory in the primary.

For the first time since 1928 a Republican presidential candidate carried Tennessee in the November election. However, Eisenhower was unable to carry the state for J. Beecher Witt, the Republican candidate for governor.

The election year also witnessed the downfall of Kenneth McKellar, aged Tennessee Senator, who lost to the young and aggressive Albert Gore.

A state constitutional convention was held in 1953, and the term of office of the governor was increased to four years without the right of two successive terms. This, however, did not apply to the incumbent. Clement early let it be known that he would be a candidate for reelection. Former Governor Browning announced his candidacy, and the race was on. Browning however, had lost his magic touch and the young Governor won an overwhelming victory. Estes Kefauver swamped Congressman Pat Sutton for the nomination for the Senate.



(USAF-AEDC photo)

*Governor Clement, members of his cabinet, and area legislators at Arnold Engineering Development Center, Summer of 1956*

Clement was the last two-year governor of the state and the first candidate to be elected for a four-year term. His tenure was marred only by a difference of opinion with the Tennessee Education Association over appropriations for the public schools. Clement was the substantial winner in these contests for he controlled the majority of the legislature.

Buford Ellington, Commissioner of Agriculture in the Clement administration, was the candidate for the governorship in 1958. Ellington had the Clement support plus the remnants of the E. H. Crump machine. Crump had died in 1954 and left no strong leader to succeed him. Edmund Orgill, Memphis mayor, was an independent candidate, and Judge Tip Taylor, Jackson jurist, became a third strong candidate. Clifford Allen decided early to make a third campaign for the governorship. It was a close three-man race, with Ellington winning by a small margin over Taylor, with Orgill running a strong third.

Ellington took office committed to a program of austerity and no new taxes. His administration has been a quiet and orderly one.

No comparable period in the history of the Volunteer State has furnished more interesting political battles than have the four decades since 1920. Basically the struggle has been one between the urban areas and the rural areas, with the margin slightly in favor of the rural voters. They have controlled the general assembly, prevented legislative redistricting of the state, and secured for themselves a goodly share of the tax money.



## CHAPTER XLIV.—NOTES

1. Nashville *Tennessean*, January 11, 1941.
2. Election returns (Manuscript records in the office of the Secretary of State). All election returns cited in this chapter are from this source.
3. Franklin O. Rouse, "The Historical Background of Tennessee's Administrative Reorganization Act of 1923," E.T.H.S. *Publications*, No. 8 (1936), 104-20; T. H. Alexander, *Austin Peay, Governor of Tennessee* (Kingsport, 1929), Chap. XVIII.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *The Commercial Appeal*, August 6, 1928.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Election returns.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *The Commercial Appeal*, August 6, 1930.
12. Nashville *Tennessean*, November 9, 1930.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Chattanooga *Times*, December 4, 1930.
15. Nashville *Tennessean*, January 1, 1931.
16. *Ibid.*, January 9, 1931.
17. *Ibid.*, March 5, 1931.
18. *Ibid.*, March 5, 1931.
19. *Ibid.*, March 5, 1931.
20. *Ibid.*, May 30, 1931.
21. *Ibid.*, May 30, 1931.
22. *Ibid.*, June 6, 1931.
23. *Ibid.*, August 8, 1932.
24. *The Commercial Appeal*, May 3, 1937.
25. Nashville *Tennessean*, September 29, 1937.
26. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1937.
27. *Ibid.*, October 3, 1937.
28. *Ibid.*, October 10, 1937.
29. *Ibid.*, October 20, 1937.
30. *The Commercial Appeal*, October 30, 1937.
31. *Ibid.*, April 3, 1938.
32. Nashville *Tennessean*, January 21, 1941.
33. *Ibid.*, January 16, 1941.

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## CHAPTER XLV

### *Conservation of Natural Resources*

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THE FIRST WHITE MEN to settle in Tennessee found a land wondrously endowed with natural resources. They found a virgin forest growing on fertile soil and teeming with wild animals and edible fowls. Nature had endowed richly this great domain with the elements necessary for human shelter and food. The early settlers were sometimes wasteful in their use of the resources which nature had made available to them. They cleared the land by cutting and burning fine trees, they practiced careless methods of soil conservation in plowing, and they killed more wild game than they could eat. Our founding fathers thought that they had found a land of plenty, a land that produced so much of the good things of life that conservation was not necessary. For practically a hundred years the people of Tennessee did little to preserve the endowment which nature had given to them. It was not until past the mid-point of the nineteenth century that, like a voice crying in the wilderness, Matthew Fontaine Maury, cried out in a speech before the Tennessee Agricultural Bureau for conservation of the soil of the state.<sup>1</sup> Scant attention was given his warning by a people realizing profits from agriculture and slavery.

*Soil Conservation*—Land is the most important natural resource of any state or nation. Without land there could be no civilization and no life for it is from the land that human life is sustained. Yet, until well into the present century neither the farmers of the state nor the state government did much to bring about the conservation of the land. It is true that in 1913 the State Department of Agriculture sounded the first faint call for soil conservation. The biennial report for 1914 said that many farmers were still using the same methods that had been used by their fathers, thereby reducing the fertility of their farms and reducing their crop yields.<sup>2</sup> This report called attention to the fact that the Tennessee farmer had little new land to clear, and that the only alternative was to preserve the fertility of land in use and to try to build up its productive capacity. As a result of this report a program for educating the farmer in soil conservation was launched in Tennessee. And the education resulted, over the years, in contour plowing, terracing, strip cropping, crop rotation, better methods of enriching the soil and in the sowing of cover crops.

Contouring is not a new method in agriculture, having been referred to by

some of the writers of ancient Rome, and is simply a plowing around the slope and on the level. The purpose of the contour is to make each furrow serve as a dam and conserve the soil by slowing down the run-off water, thereby preventing the top soil from washing away. More than one million acres of land in the state are now plowed by this method and there is still need for contour plowing of additional acres.

A second method of erosion control is the terrace. It, too, is old. The Incas in Peru built bench-type terraces with stone retaining walls eight to fourteen feet high and filled in the soil by hand. It was used in the Philippines two thousand years ago, in ancient China, and in the Mediterranean Basin.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of terracing is to break long slopes into a series of shorter slopes and is designed principally to control run-off on sloping land and thereby prevent erosion. It enables row crops to be grown on sloping land that would otherwise suffer from erosion. Terracing does not take the place of other measures but is used in conjunction with them. Farmers have built more than thirty thousand miles of terraces in Tennessee, offering protection to some 285,000 acres of land but leaving thousands of additional acres in need of terracing.<sup>4</sup>

Crop rotation is not new in the history of farming, but the only rotation used for many centuries was the three-field system in which one field had winter grain, one had spring grain, and one lay fallow. Rotation as a soil-saving measure was not actually possible until the seventeenth century when cultivated grasses and clovers made their appearance.<sup>5</sup> Just prior to the Civil War, in the northeastern part of the state, there was a variety of crops grown as well as a considerable practice of animal husbandry. The mountain farmer grew corn, wheat, oats, and tobacco and at the same time had cattle and hogs to feed in his pastures and in his corn fields after the harvest. However, by the end of the nineteenth century Western competition had reduced cattle and hog raising in the state and corn became the chief money crop of farmers. There was neither time nor money for extensive crop rotation.<sup>6</sup> Dr. H. A. Morgan, in 1913, said: "Farmers of this state have now acknowledged by practice the influence of crop rotation upon better methods of farm management, embracing, as it does economical soil improvement and livestock husbandry."<sup>7</sup> Tennessee farmers were slow to take the advice of Dr. Morgan, for throughout the next forty years such agencies as the State Department of Agriculture and the Extension Service of the University of Tennessee were constantly urging the farmers to do more rotating of their crops. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of Franklin Roosevelt's first administration did much to encourage crop rotation by having farmers take large areas of land out of the production of certain controlled crops and freeing these lands for planting in other crops. However, as of 1957, the problem of crop rotation was still an important one in Tennessee. Although 1,600,000 acres were being rotated, according to the best estimates there was about two-and-one-half times that amount still in need of rotation.<sup>8</sup>





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Shelbyville—Judging Yearlings at Tennessee Walking Horse Show*

After the Civil War parts of Tennessee turned again to the cultivation of cotton, but the land had been neglected and it became necessary to use large amounts of fertilizer in order to keep production at a high level. However, the quality of commercial fertilizer was not always good. This resulted in the passage of a series of laws by the general assembly providing that the manufacturers must label the containers of fertilizer according to contents therein, and providing for the inspection of bulk fertilizer.<sup>9</sup> The legislature also created the State Chemical Laboratory, as a part of the Department of Agriculture, for the analysis of commercial fertilizers, commercial cattle feed, and garden seeds offered for sale in the state.<sup>10</sup> The state, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, and the Tennessee Valley Authority have combined their efforts to supply to the farmers such items as lime and phosphate, and great quantities of these ingredients have been spread on the farms.

Commissioner T. F. Peck, as early as 1914, started urging Tennessee far-

mers to plant sweet clover as a part of the soil reclamation program, because it would grow on worn out soils on which other clovers would not grow. Commissioner Peck said that it would supply more organic matter, more nitrogen to the soil when turned under than any other known fertilizer or legume.<sup>11</sup> In the years from 1933 to 1939 there was an average of 315,000 acres of cotton land placed in clovers or other legumes each year.<sup>12</sup> The University of Tennessee provides a soil survey service for individual farms, and in 1957 surveys had been completed on 11,484,677 acres of land, approximately forty-three per cent of the land area of the state.<sup>13</sup> These surveys result in the farmer being advised as to the type of soil improvement which he needs to place in operation on his land and as to the type of fertilizer that his land requires for conservation and improved production.

*Reforestation*—Forests, to the pioneer settlers, were liabilities, something to be rid of; to the growing young state they were something to be exploited for new industries, new railroads, new towns, and new cities. Few Tennesseans were concerned with preservation of the great forest resources before the dawn of the twentieth century. Gifford Pinchot and Theodore Roosevelt led the national fight for forest conservation. Their efforts brought about an increasing awareness in the minds of Tennesseans of the need of preserving the forests of the state. It was not until 1921 that the legislature, due to public demand, established a Bureau of Forestry in the state. The principal objective of this division was to encourage the reforestation of idle, eroded, or abandoned farm land. This new bureau, in 1923, instituted the practice of sending farmers ten pounds of locust seeds on request for spring planting. By 1928, 146,000 locust seedlings were planted in West Tennessee each year. Further impetus was given to reforestation in 1934 when the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Civilian Conservation Corps entered actively into the field. The TVA established two large nurseries, one at Norris Dam and the other at Muscle Shoals. From 1934 to 1942 the TVA and the Civilian Conservation Corps were responsible for the planting of 150,000,000 seedlings in the state. These seedlings, until 1957, were free to the farmers. Thousands of acres of poor and exhausted Tennessee farm land are now growing pine as a result of the combined efforts of the state and federal governments. In 1947 the state established a nursery at Pinson and has made available millions of seedlings to the farmers at a nominal cost. In spite of these stupendous efforts, the Department of Conservation in 1954 found that at least 1,000,000 acres of Tennessee land needed reforestation and that the process was taking place at a rate of only twelve thousand acres per year. The goal, announced by the department in 1956, was 100,000 acres per year. The number of seedlings made available in that year had increased to 23,000,000.<sup>14</sup>

The location of large pulp mills in the state accentuated the emphasis that state officials were placing on reforestation. The Bowaters Mill near Calhoun

and the mill of the International Paper Company now under construction near Savannah have encouraged many large landowners to plant great areas of land in pine. This interest has been reflected in a material increase in the number of seedlings planted, reaching 48,467,100 in 1958.<sup>14</sup> With good management, it appears that tree farming is going to become a large and paying industry to the people of the state. Most of the forests of Tennessee are privately owned, but the state and federal governments have encouraged the growth of forests by providing technical assistance in growing trees and managing wooded areas. There are now 180,000 forest farm owners in the state.<sup>15</sup>

Reforestation, management, and utilization are not enough. Protection from fire is another duty of the Division of Forestry, as it is now called, and while great strides have been made in the past two decades, fire still destroys hundreds of acres of trees each year. The first effort on the part of the state to control forest fires was inaugurated in 1922 when 4,985,355 acres were placed under fire control at a cost of \$24,899.55. This control consisted of a few widely isolated observation towers, each manned by one observer who had in his car a fire swatter, a rake, a hoe, a shovel, an axe, and a five-gallon spray pump. This represents quite a contrast to the situation existing in the state today when there are one hundred and forty-four fire towers in the state, each manned around the clock in dry seasons. The Division of Forestry now has two-way short wave radio systems with twenty-nine base radio stations, one hundred and ten mobile radio sets, one hundred and nineteen tower sets, eighteen portable sets, one radio repair shop, and two radio relay stations. The division also has forty mechanized units, each equipped with a two-ton truck for carrying a crawler-type tractor, a fire-line plow, a mobile radio, and numerous small implements. A unit is also composed of four light fire trucks, each equipped with a water tank and hose, and back pumps for emergencies. Fire control became a cooperative enterprise between the state and the counties by 1950 when thirty counties joined with the state in this program. This number had increased to seventy in 1958. Appropriations for fire control had reached \$599,949.85 in 1958 and this money was being spent in providing fire control for 10,534,266 acres.<sup>16</sup> While loss from fire in the woodlands of Tennessee is still considerable, the danger is being brought under control through expert methods of fire fighting and through an advertising campaign to make the people conscious of the danger.

*Conservation of Wildlife*—Forest conservation goes hand in hand with wildlife conservation, for wildlife cannot exist in large numbers on denuded land. In the beginning, there were not more than 20,000 Indians in the state to feed upon the wild game, and the vast number of animals and birds were protected by the virgin forests which cloaked the state. Nature was in balance but it was not destined to remain so. Early in the nineteenth century a few people in the state started calling attention to the diminishing supply of game. As a conse-



quence, the general assembly of 1951 passed a law making it illegal to poison fish.<sup>17</sup> The first closed seasons on hunting and fishing in the state were established in 1873, but were applicable only to Montgomery, Maury, Davidson, and Robertson counties. A state Game and Fish Department was established in 1903 and a state game warden was appointed to serve but no compensation was paid this individual. The warden had the authority to appoint deputies who would be paid costs in the cases for which they obtained convictions. J. H. Acklen was the first appointed warden in the history of the state. The Tennessee Game and Fish Protection Association, composed of interested citizens, was formed in 1905 for the purpose of furthering wildlife protection. The Department of Conservation was created in 1935, with a Division of Game and Fish. Prior to that year, the general assembly had passed a multiplicity of laws concerning the protection of wildlife. Private acts constituted a thorn in the flesh of all general laws pertaining to game preservation. The State Game and Fish Commission was created in 1949 and the members were appointed on the recommendations of interested citizens in all sections of the state. This commission was charged with the responsibility of management of wildlife resources of the state. By 1958 there were twenty-two game management areas in the state and these areas are now being used by 40,000 hunters each year. These game management areas offer greater concentration of different game because of the supervision given them. Game reservations are being stocked with game that had long ago ceased to be plentiful in the state, such as deer, bear, beaver, and grouse. Hunting of this game is planned by the State Department of Conservation, and the annual kill of each type is regulated so as to prevent depletion of the species.

The Great Smoky Mountains have six hundred miles of clear trout streams as well as four thousand types of plant life and one hundred and fifty-two kinds of trees. The area abounds with black bear and deer and around Tellico the wild boar furnishes hunters with a rare type of sport. Twenty state-supervised lakes furnish fishing, boating, and recreation areas to a large number of citizens each year. The Division of State Parks is responsible for the operation of twenty-one parks, containing a total of 130,000 acres of the most picturesque land and waters in the state.

Water pollution has long been recognized as a menace to wildlife as well as a health hazard to the citizens of the state. As early as 1929 the general assembly directed that studies be made of stream pollution and that corrective measure be instituted. A lack of funds and the absence of authority made this work academic rather than positive.<sup>18</sup> A stream Pollution Board was created by the legislature in 1945. This board was integrated with the Department of Public Health.<sup>19</sup> The Division of Water Resources was activated in 1957 and has as one of its principal purposes the determination of the waters that should be reserved for general public purposes, including navigation, sanitation, re-

creation, maintenance of fish and aquatic life, the maintenance of unusual scenic features, and other public purposes.

Education has been the strong right arm of the Department of Conservation since 1937 when an educational program was instituted by the department. The educational service of the department has been instrumental in arousing public opinion to the necessity of conserving all basic natural resources and teaching the citizens the means and techniques of conservation.

The vast Tennessee Valley Authority has contributed richly to conservation in Tennessee. The dams and lakes have furnished one of the most effective means of flood control that the state has ever known. Millions of acres of land were subject to overflow in Tennessee, notably in Obion County, where twenty-five per cent of the land was subject to flood before the coming of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Chattanooga had long suffered heavy flood damage. The Cumberland River offered an annual flood menace to the low sections of Nashville. The Wolf, Hatchie, and Forked Deer rivers annually flooded their basins and carried thousands of tons of rich soil into the Mississippi River. While the TVA admits that no flood control system can be infallible, it is certain that its system of dams and reservoirs have been of inestimable value in restricting floods and erosion in the state.

*Mineral Resources of the State*—Nature has been generous to Tennessee in the form of mineral resources, for in the state are found coal, iron ore, copper ore, lead, phosphate, and marble.

Tennessee ships very little coal to outside markets and the coal fields supply less than one-half of the coal used in the state. The coal-producing area lies chiefly in the counties separating East from Middle Tennessee. It has been principally the lack of access to markets that has kept coal from being shipped out of the state. This, however, will probably guarantee an adequacy of coal to the people of the state for many years.

Iron ore was discovered in the state before it was admitted to the Union. Little use was made of these deposits for many years. Chattanooga is the center of iron industry in the state, being one of the largest producers of steel boilers in the nation. Memphis also has a number of industries producing steel products.

Polk County is the center of the state's copper industry. This deposit in the Ducktown area is the fifth largest copper producing deposit in the United States. This area is known as the "copper bowl," and because of the fumes of the sulphuric acid was for many years denuded of vegetation. Tennessee supplies many tons of copper each year to the industries of the country.

Tennessee marble is famous all over the country because of its beautiful appearance and fine polishing qualities. The marble-producing area includes the counties of Knox, Blount, Loudon, Union, Hawkins, Greene, Monroe, Grainger, Jefferson, Roane, McMinn, Bradley, Franklin, and Henry. Tennessee ranks

first among the states of the nation in the production of marble. Some of the finest interior decorating marble in North America is found in the state. Much Tennessee marble has been used in the buildings of the national capital. Two blocks of Tennessee marble were used in the building of the Washington monument. There appears to be no end to the production of marble in the state for the supply seems to be virtually inexhaustible.

Phosphate is found in sufficient quantities in Maury, Hickman, and Lewis counties to permit it to be mined on a profitable basis. Maury County is the largest phosphate mining county in the state, with thousands of tons having been mined there since its discovery in 1893.

Even though it took the people of the state a century to become aroused to the need of conservation of natural resources, the state has done an excellent piece of work in conservation since its arousal. There appears to be little danger now of exhausting the splendid endowment that nature bequeathed to the state. There is abundant evidence that the state is becoming a Mecca for hunters and fishermen. The water resources have played a leading role in attracting industry to the state and soil conservation is restoring fertility to the land. Once again wildlife is finding a haven in the reforested areas of the state.

#### CHAPTER XLV—NOTES

1. Quoted by Robert H. White, *Tennessee: Its Growth and Progress* (Nashville, 1947) 292.
2. Tennessee Department of Agriculture, *Biennial Report*, 1913-1914 (Nashville, 1914), 10. Hereinafter cited as *Biennial Report*.
3. Karl B. Mickey, *Man and the Soil* (Chicago, 1945), 72.
4. *Soil and Water Conservation in Tennessee* (Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, Nashville, 1958), 7.
5. Hugo H. Bennett, *Soil Conservation* (New York, 1939), 340.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Tennessee Agriculture* (Department of Agriculture, Nashville), II, No. 11 (December, 1913), 448.
8. *Soil and Water Conservation*, 8.
9. *Tennessee Agriculture*, II, No. 11, p. 12.
10. *Ibid.*, II, No. 4 (April, 1913), 222.
11. *Ibid.*, III, No. 2 (February, 1914), 189.
12. Lee S. Greene and others, *Rescued Earth* (Knoxville, 1948), 159.
13. *Soil and Water Conservation*, 4.
14. *Biennial Report*, 9.
15. *Ibid.*, 1954, 10.
16. *Ibid.*, 1958, 7.
17. *Public Acts*, 1951, Chap. CXV, 458.
18. Greene, *Rescued Earth*, 171.
19. *Tennessee Conservationist*, XXIV, No. 2 (February, 1959), 3.



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CHAPTER XLVI

*Tennesseans in National Affairs*

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**G**EORGE WASHINGTON CAMPBELL, Secretary of the Treasury in the cabinet of James Madison, was the first Tennessean to serve in a presidential cabinet. Since his appointment in 1814 a number of Tennesseans have rendered valuable service to the nation as cabinet members. Among this group were John Eaton, Cave Johnson, Felix Grundy, John Bell, Aaron V. Brown, and David M. Key. All of these men rendered distinguished service in the last century.

The dawn of the twentieth century marked the inauguration of a new era in government service for Tennesseans. The wounds of the Civil War had been largely forgotten and it was again possible to appoint men from the old Confederate states to important posts in the national government.

*Luke E. Wright*—Luke E. Wright, Secretary of War in the cabinet of Theodore Roosevelt, was born August 29, 1846, in Giles County, Tennessee.<sup>1</sup> He was the son of Judge Archibald Wright, distinguished Tennessee lawyer and judge. Luke Wright moved to Memphis with his parents in 1850, and received his early education in the city schools. He enlisted in Company G, 154th Senior Tennessee Regiment, Confederate, in June, 1861. Young Wright rose to the rank of lieutenant and participated in the battles of Stone's River, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge. At the close of the war the young veteran entered the University of Mississippi to further his education. He did not graduate, but returned to Memphis to read law in the office of his father.<sup>2</sup> When he was twenty-four years of age he was elected district attorney in Memphis. Wright sought and received this office on the Democratic ticket.<sup>3</sup> He held this post for a period of eight years and was thereafter called "General" by his friends. He then entered into a law partnership with his father. During this period of his life he was an active leader in Memphis civic affairs and performed heroic service in the yellow fever epidemics.<sup>4</sup>

The first call to national service came to Luke Wright in 1900 when President McKinley appointed him a member of the Philippine Commission, of which William Howard Taft was chairman. Taft became governor of the Philippines, but became ill and returned to the United States. During the absence of Taft, Wright served as acting governor of the islands. When Taft

left the islands to take a place in the Roosevelt cabinet, Wright was made governor of the Philippines. The Tennessean filled this position for more than two years, and then was appointed by President Roosevelt as the first United States ambassador to Japan. Wright served in this position for fourteen months and did much to establish friendly relations between the two countries. When Taft left the cabinet to become a candidate for President, Roosevelt appointed Wright secretary of war. Thus, the Memphis attorney became the first cabinet member of this century from Tennessee. In this important post, he soon established friendly relations with army officers, for John J. Pershing had served as his military aide while he was in Japan. Wright was among the first officials to recognize the future value of the aeroplane as a military weapon and gave his encouragement to the development of this future weapon. He served his country well in three important posts. With the expiration of Roosevelt's term, Wright returned to Memphis to resume the practice of law and to assume a position of leadership in civic affairs. His law practice was large, but the courtly Wright always found time for participating in community affairs. He died on November 17, 1922.

Luke Wright probably did as much as any other individual to restore order in the Philippine Islands and to bring to that land a stable government and a prosperous economy. He brought about a settlement with Japan on the issue of immigration to the United States at a time when the Japanese were flush with their victory over Russia. The national defenses were improved as a result of his work as Secretary of War. This first twentieth century cabinet member from the Volunteer State left a record of splendid accomplishment for his state and nation.

*Jacob M. Dickinson*—President Taft selected a worthy successor to Luke Wright in the War Department by naming Jacob M. Dickinson to that cabinet post. Dickinson was born in Columbus, Mississippi, January 30, 1851. He came to the University of Nashville where he earned two degrees. He then studied law at Columbia University. Following his graduation from that institution he went abroad to study at the University of Leipzig and to attend lectures at the Sorbonne. Young Dickinson was admitted to the bar in 1874 and opened a law office in Nashville. Although he soon developed a large practice in the Tennessee city, he moved to Chicago in 1899. While he was engaged in practice in Tennessee, he was, by special commission, frequently a member of the supreme bench of the state. From 1895 to 1897 Dickinson was assistant attorney-general of the United States. He represented the United States before the Alaska Boundary Tribunal in 1903. This was one of his most remarkable legal victories and he is generally credited with having won this dispute for the United States, with the aid of threats from President Theodore Roosevelt. From 1899 to 1901 Dickinson served as general solicitor for the Illinois Central

Railroad and as its general counsel from 1901 to 1909. He left this position to become secretary of war in the Taft cabinet. He held this position for two years and continued the policies of Luke E. Wright. He was instrumental in maintaining a high level of efficiency in the armed forces at a time when conditions were unsettled in Europe. Dickinson was president of the American Bar Association in 1907-1908. When he left the cabinet he returned to Chicago and resumed the practice of law, but maintained his business interests in Tennessee and was a frequent visitor in Nashville until his death on December 14, 1928. His career was a valuable one to his state and nation.

*James Clark McReynolds*—The only Tennessean to achieve the office of attorney general in a presidential cabinet since the Civil War was James Clark McReynolds. He also served on the supreme bench of the United States. McReynolds was born in Elkton, Kentucky, on February 3, 1862. He graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1882 and from the law department of the University of Virginia in 1884. He soon attained a splendid reputation as a lawyer in Nashville and was appointed to a professorship on the law faculty of Vanderbilt. He served three years in this position without giving up his private practice. Although he was a staunch Democrat, McReynolds was appointed assistant attorney general in the administration of the first Roosevelt. Leaving this position in 1907, he entered private practice in New York. President Wilson appointed him attorney general in 1913. While he was in this office he handled the cases of the Union and Southern Pacific Railroad merger, the International Harvester Company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, the Reading Company, and the New York, New Haven, and Hartford, under the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. These cases gave him a national reputation as a trust fighting lawyer and brought him an appointment to the United States Supreme Court in October, 1914. His record had been a distinguished one in the cabinet, and possibly President Wilson thought that he would be a liberal justice on the bench. However, the Tennessean aligned himself with the conservative justices and was soon in conflict with Stone, Holmes, and Brandeis. During the decade of the twenties the conservatives ruled the court. It was not until Franklin D. Roosevelt became President that the issue of liberalism versus conservatism became so sharply defined on the bench. Then McReynolds usually found himself of the conservative persuasion. He became known as the great dissenter from Tennessee.<sup>5</sup> His difference of opinion with his fellow justices and with the popular president made McReynolds unpopular in his home state. He has been accused of being a paste-pot justice, of being anti-Semitic, and of snarling at his contemporaries on the bench. However, there can be little doubt that McReynolds was a leavening influence in the country at a time when it was fashionable to be liberal. He retired from the court in 1941 and most Tennesseans were pleased when he had become inactive.





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Cordell Hull with Sculptor*

*Cordell Hull*—Perhaps no man has been more beloved by the people of Tennessee than Cordell Hull. This stalwart son of the Cumberland Mountains was to serve longer in the office of secretary of state than any other man in history. His career in this office was not less distinguished than that of his predecessors and he served in some of the most difficult years in history.

Cordell Hull was born October 2, 1871, in a log cabin in Overton County. His parents were poor but honest farm people who gave him the best education that they were capable of financing.<sup>6</sup> Young Hull attended the best available schools in the mountain district which was his home. He then attended briefly the normal school at Bowling Green, Kentucky. He read law for a while in the office of John H. McMillin at Celina and followed this with an attendance of slightly more than one year at the Cumberland University Law School in Lebanon. This completed the formal schooling of the future statesman but

his education was continued by his avid reading. He was admitted to the bar before he was twenty-one years of age.

Prior to the completion of his education, young Hull had been elected chairman of the Democratic Executive Committee for Clay County. The youthful mountaineer received his baptism of political fire in this position. Before he was twenty-one years of age Cordell was elected from his district as a member of the Tennessee house of representatives. He served two terms in this assembly and soon became a leader in that body. He declined to offer for a third term in the legislature because he felt that his law practice needed all of his attention.

The Spanish-American War interrupted the practice of the young lawyer, for he proceeded to raise a company of soldiers in his home district and was commissioned captain. The young officer led Company H, Fourth Regiment of the Tennessee Volunteer Infantry to Cuba. This company served capably in Cuba and returned to Tennessee in May, 1899.<sup>7</sup> With his return to Tennessee, the young veteran moved his law office from Celina to Gainesboro, entering into a law partnership with John J. Gore. The new firm soon established a substantial practice. This practice was interrupted in 1903 with the appointment of Hull as presiding judge of the Fifth Judicial District. At the time, the jurist was thirty-one years of age, one of the youngest men in the history of the state to become a judge. The best characterization of Hull's record as a judge comes from his own pen: "I do remember that on several occasions old friends appeared before me charged with some offense or other. Whatever their expectations, they received the same justice meted out to other persons."<sup>8</sup> Judge Hull was re-elected in 1904 for a full term.

Cordell Hull was elected as a Democratic member of Congress in 1906 from the Fourth Congressional District of Tennessee. This election was to lead to a long tenure in the House of Representatives and to eventually place the rugged Tennessean on the national scene as a political leader and as a statesman. Within three weeks of taking his seat as a member, Hull introduced a comprehensive income-tax bill.<sup>9</sup> This marked the first and a failing attempt on the part of the young legislator to secure the passage of an income tax. The Tennessean, however, was persistent and his efforts were crowned with success in 1913 when the income tax was made a part of the Underwood Tariff Act. Hull had been assigned to the powerful Ways and Means Committee in 1911. He soon became a leading figure on this committee, advocating and securing the passage of an Estate Tax Bill, and constantly fighting for tariff revision. It was while serving on this committee that the Tennessean formulated and adopted the policies which were to motivate him as secretary of state—a policy of reciprocal trade agreements as the best insurer of peace among the nations of the world. He viewed protective tariffs as trade barriers that must inevitably lead to war.

Congressman Hull was a relentless enemy of monopolies and had an im-

portant role in passing the Clayton Anti-Trust Act. He strongly supported the progressive program of Woodrow Wilson and worked constantly for the passage of the measures recommended by President Wilson during World War I. Probably Hull's strong support of Wilson and American entry into the League of Nations cost him reelection in 1920 as he was a victim of the Republican landslide of that year.

With this involuntary vacation from the House of Representatives, Hull became chairman of the Democratic National Committee. He led this committee through a period that many observers thought was the end of the party. Under Hull's capable leadership the party paid its debts from the 1920 campaign and waged a vigorous campaign for the election of a Democratic majority in 1922. Hull was among the seventy-five new House members elected by the Democrats. In 1923 he resumed his old place in the House and with it his post of leadership in that body. During the years of Republican domination of the Congress, Hull was a leader of the opposition, constantly opposing the high tariff policies of the party in power and making for himself a name as an expert on the tariff question.

The death of Senator Lawrence D. Tyson in September, 1929, opened the door for Hull to enter the Senate. He decided to become a candidate for the long term in the 1930 elections. The Congressman was opposed in the Democratic primary by Andrew L. Todd, who had the active support of the politically powerful Luke Lea and strong hopes of the support of E. H. Crump, the czar of Shelby County politics. At the last moment Crump decided to keep hands off, and Hull was the victor in the race.<sup>10</sup>

A call to a higher duty was to cut short the senatorial career of the Tennessean, for with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Hull was appointed secretary of state. It was in this office that the stalwart son of Tennessee was to render his greatest service to the nation, guiding the country's diplomacy through the difficult pre-World War II years. Among the early problems to be faced by the new secretary was that of according recognition to Russia. This country had not been recognized by the United States for sixteen years. Under the leadership of Hull, satisfactory terms for giving Russia diplomatic recognition were worked out. The new secretary then turned his attention to the establishment of a good neighbor policy with the countries of Central and South America. His trip to South America bore fruit and we were to enter into a policy that resulted in the friendship and cooperation of the great majority of these countries though four years of war.

Hull viewed with alarm the rise of Hitler and Mussolini. He constantly struggled to maintain the peace of the world. His system of reciprocal trade agreements probably helped maintain the friendship of many nations for the democracies as the dictators held dominion over their own countries and attempted to bring other nations into their sphere of influence. His astute leader-





(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)

*Nashville—Cordell Hull Building*

ship kept us from becoming involved in the Spanish Civil War and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. The Neutrality Act of 1936 was intended by Hull to keep us out of wars involving other nations. While in the end this policy did not succeed in keeping the peace, it represented a strong effort of the part of the State Department to maintain our rights throughout the world without involving us in war.

There was much mention of Hull for the presidency in 1940 and at one time he seemed to have been the choice of Roosevelt for the office.<sup>11</sup> However, Hull denies in his writings that he ever wanted the office. It appears certain that Roosevelt did ask him to take second place in the 1940 ticket.<sup>12</sup> Hull refused this offer stating that he preferred to serve as secretary of state. Roosevelt was reelected and Hull continued to work to keep the United States out of war.

Hull labored heroically to keep peace with Japan in the months preceding

Pearl Harbor. His aim was to keep peace and if that could not be done to delay war until the United States was better prepared.<sup>13</sup> In the latter objective he was successful. He was a participant in one of the most dramatic conferences in diplomatic history on December 7, 1941. Japanese emissaries were in his office at the moment that bombs were raining on American installations at Pearl Harbor. The Hull statement to Nomura remains a classic of Tennessee diplomacy as the Secretary had learned it in his youth in the Cumberland Mountains.

The Tennessee diplomat remained at his post during the trying days of the war, working constantly to make the oppressed peoples of the world understand the American position. Also, he was confronted with maintaining good relations with our allies, notably Russia, who demanded more than she should have received. Cordell Hull became one of the leading architects of the peace that inevitably follows war. He was a moving force in the important Dumbarton Oaks conference and was one of the chief participants in forming the United Nations. He probably did more than any other person toward preventing the United Nations and the peace plans from becoming a political issue in the 1944 presidential campaign. However, Hull's efforts to establish peace and his long tenure in office with scant periods of vacation had sapped his strength. He held the office until after the election of 1944, although he was far from a well man.

Hull had been recommended for the Nobel Peace Prize several times during his tenure in office. He was given this award in 1945. Then in 1947 President Truman conferred on the ailing Hull the Medal of Merit with oak leaf cluster. The invalid statesman spent most of his remaining years in the hospital working on his memoirs which were published in 1948. In these years he was increasingly revered by the people of Tennessee, the nation, and the world. He died July 23, 1955.

*Tennesseans on the Supreme Court*—Three Tennesseans, within the present century, have served on the highest court in the land. The men served in different decades of the century and each made a contribution to the judicial history of the nation.

*Horace H. Lurton*—This native of Newport, Kentucky, came to Tennessee after the Civil War. Young Lurton had started his college career at Douglas University in Chicago. He left college to enter the Confederate service. He was captured at Fort Donelson but escaped and joined the command of John Hunt Morgan. He was again captured in Ohio and remained a prisoner until the end of the war. After peace was restored he entered the law department of Cumberland University. He graduated from Cumberland in 1867 and started the practice of law at Clarksville. He became a member of the supreme court of Tennessee in 1886 and was elevated to the office of chief justice in 1893.

Two months later President Cleveland appointed him a judge of the sixth United States Judicial Circuit. He served on this court for five years and resigned to become professor of constitutional law at Vanderbilt University. It was from this position that President Taft called him in 1910 to become a member of the Supreme Court. Lurton had met Taft in Ohio and the two men had formed a friendship that was to last as long as the Tennessean lived. Lurton had the reputation of being devoted to the constitution and to the established rules of law. He died at Atlantic City on July 12, 1914 at the age of seventy.

*Edward T. Sanford*—This distinguished Tennessee jurist was a native of Knoxville and received his undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee in 1883. He attended the graduate school of Harvard University, receiving his M.A. in 1889. He also was a graduate of the Harvard Law School. He practiced law in his native state and was appointed assistant attorney general of the United States by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907. A year later he was appointed United States District Judge of Middle and East Tennessee. His career on this bench was so distinguished that in 1923 President Harding appointed him to the highest court in the land. Probably his most meaningful decision was in the Pocket Veto Case, holding inoperative a bill passed by the Congress less than ten days before adjournment and which the President neither signed nor returned.<sup>14</sup>

Justice Sanford was one of the most cultured men on the court. He held four earned college degrees and served on the board of trustees of the University of Tennessee and was also a trustee of Peabody College. He died March 8, 1930.

Our third justice has been discussed under the heading of cabinet members.

Horace H. Lurton, Edward T. Sanford, and James C. McReynolds have made their impression on the American system of justice. They served their state and nation well in the courts. They all deserve a rich place in the history of this state and nation.

*Tennesseans in Congress*—The Volunteer State has always been blessed with able men in the Senate and the House of Representatives. The present Senators from Tennessee are no less able than the Tennesseans who served in the years before their terms began. The senior Senator, Estes Kefauver, has been twice seriously considered as a possible Democratic nominee for the presidency. Kefauver entered the presidential lists in 1952 after attracting national attention as chairman of the Senate Committee on Crime. For two ballots he led the list of aspirants at the Chicago convention. Again in 1956 he was a front runner for the nomination before withdrawing in favor of Adlai Stevenson. He was nominated for the vice presidency in that year. Kefauver has been a strong advocate of the Tennessee Valley Authority, a moderate on the controversial civil rights issue, a friend of the small business man, and a liberal



on labor legislation. He is now serving his second term in the Senate.

Albert Gore defeated the aging Kenneth McKellar in 1952. He immediately became an important member of the Senate. He has been mentioned for both the presidency and the vice presidency. Gore is especially interested in favorable farm legislation, a federal program of highways, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. He was elected for a second term in 1958.

Tennessee has nine members of the House of Representatives. Two of them are Republicans, B. Carroll Reece and Howard Baker. Reece is important in the ranks of the Republican party. He has served as chairman of the Republican National Committee. He is generally regarded as the foremost Republican in the state. Other members of Congress from Tennessee are James B. Frazier, Jr., Joe L. Evins, J. Carlton Loser, Ross Bass, Tom Murray, Robert A. Everett, and Clifford Davis. All of these men have served well on their respective committees. They deserve full biographies in this history but limitations of space will not permit.

The people of Tennessee have every reason to be proud of the role which Tennesseans have assumed in the national government.

#### CHAPTER XLVI—NOTES

1. Moore and Foster, *Tennessee*, II, 5.
2. *Ibid.*, 6.
3. *Ibid.*, 6.
4. *Ibid.*, 6. For a detailed account of his career see Ann Barron Carroll, "The Life of Gen. Luke E. Wright" (M.A. thesis, University, 1942).
5. John P. Frank, *Marble Palace: The Supreme Court in American Life* (New York, 1958), 45.
6. Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull* (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948), 11.
7. *Ibid.*, 34.
8. *Ibid.*, 40.
9. *Ibid.*, 48.
10. *Ibid.*, 138.
11. *Ibid.*, 856.
12. *Ibid.*, 859.
13. *Ibid.*, 759.
14. Allen E. Ragan, "Mr. Justice Sanford," *E.T.H.S. Publications*, No. 15 (1943), 74-88.

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## CHAPTER XLVII

### *Society and Culture in Mid-Century*

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SINCE THAT DAY IN 1785 when James Robertson secured the incorporation of Davidson Academy, Tennessee has marched steadily along the route of educational progress.<sup>1</sup> From that beginning under the guiding hand of the Reverend Thomas B. Craighead there emerged Cumberland College, later to become the University of Nashville and eventually to serve the nation under the name of George Peabody College for Teachers. The founders of the Volunteer State were determined to provide educational opportunities for their children.

Present-day Tennesseans have been no less determined than their ancestors to see that schools and colleges operate for the benefit of all of the children. The state today has some fifty institutions of higher learning supported, in the main, by the taxes and contributions of the people.<sup>2</sup> These colleges and universities serve not only the people of Tennessee but attract hundreds of students from other states.

*State-Supported Institutions of Higher Learning*—The University of Tennessee, chartered in 1794 as Blount College, is the largest institution of higher learning in the state. The principal campus is located in Knoxville, with the medical, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, and public health divisions in Memphis. A branch of the University is located in Martin and the School of Social Work in Nashville. Approximately 16,000 students are enrolled on the combined campuses of the University. The University is distinguished for its work in medicine, agriculture, and home economics. Andrew D. Holt, long-time Tennessee educator, is president of the university.<sup>3</sup>

Memphis State University, opened in 1912 as the West Tennessee Normal School, is the second largest publicly supported institution in the state. The University, located in Memphis, has an enrollment of approximately 4,500 students. This institution, since World War II, has been characterized by a rapid growth, and surveys indicate that this growth will continue. Dr. C. C. Humphreys, Tennessee-born educator, was recently named president.

The General Education Bill of 1909 authorized the establishment of four normal schools. Memphis State University was one of those normal schools. Prior to the opening of the Memphis institution, the East Tennessee State College, at



(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Memphis State University, Administration Building*

Johnson City, opened its doors as one of the three normal schools. This institution, now under the presidency of Burgin Dossett, enrolls more than 4,000 students. Like its sister institution at Memphis it offers the undergraduate degrees as well as a master of arts in education and a few other fields.

Middle Tennessee State College, Murfreesboro, is the third of the normal schools to receive the designation of a state college. This institution opened its doors in 1911 and has enjoyed a rapid growth, now enrolling more than 1,500 students. Dr. Quill Cope, native of White County, is president of this college.

Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, was established in 1916. The institution, through much of its life, had been more a general college than a technical school. However, in recent years it has increased its endeavors along technical lines and is now offering a degree in engineering. This school, under the presidency of Everett Derryberry, has an enrollment of some 2,800 students.

The youngest of the state-supported colleges is Austin Peay State college, Clarksville. This college was opened in 1929 on the campus of Southwestern



Presbyterian which had moved to Memphis. Austin Peay was named for a former governor of Tennessee who had lived in Clarksville. Halbert Harvill is president of the college which has an enrollment of approximately 1,300 students.

Although all of the state-supported colleges and universities, except the University of Tennessee (where only the law and graduate schools have desegregated), are officially open to Negro as well as white students, the state operates Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State University at Nashville for Negroes. This institution was created in 1912 under the normal school act of 1909 and has an enrollment of 3,000 students.

The University of Tennessee is controlled by a Board of Trustees, the members of which are appointed by the governor on a rotating basis. This board makes policies and is responsible for the fiscal operation of the university.

A nine member State Board of Education governs the operation of the other state institutions. The members of this board are appointed by the governor for six year terms. Not more than three members are from one grand division of the state.

*Privately Supported Colleges and Universities*—There are more than forty privately supported institutions of higher learning in the state. A number of these institutions have substantial endowments while others are supported by gifts and tuition. Also, a number of them have church affiliations and receive strong support from their respective denominations.

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, is the largest private university in the state. It was chartered in 1872 as Central University but changed its name a year later. This university is famous for its medical school and maintains and operates the Vanderbilt Hospital. It offers graduate degrees as well as undergraduate degrees.

Across the avenue from Vanderbilt is located the campus of George Peabody College for Teachers. This is, perhaps, one of the most famous teacher-training institutions in the country. It offers graduate work as well as undergraduate work, and enrolls approximately 4,000 students. It derives its financial support from an endowment as well as gifts from individuals and foundations.

The University of the South, established in 1857 at Sewanee, is supported by twenty-one dioceses of the Protestant Episcopal Church. This institution was founded on the concept that the scholar would come to the school, for it is located on the Cumberland Plateau. It is solely for men and no young ladies are enrolled except in summer sessions. It restricts its enrollment to approximately 600 men.

Union University and Lambuth College are located in Jackson. Union is supported by the Baptist Church while Lambuth is a Methodist school. Both of these schools have comparatively small enrollments and offer only liberal arts work.

The leading Presbyterian college in the state is Southwestern at Memphis.



*Nashville—Vanderbilt University*

(Courtesy Tennessee Conservation Dept.)



Southwestern came to Memphis in 1925 from Clarksville and has continued to limit its student body to approximately 700 members.

Christian Brothers College is the largest Catholic college in the state. It offers work in engineering and business administration to approximately 600 young men.

Bethel College, McKenzie, is the only Cumberland Presbyterian college in the nation. It was established early in the history of the denomination and enrolls more than 500 students.

Among the other leading church-related colleges in the state are: Maryville College, Presbyterian; David Lipscomb, Church of Christ; Carson-Newman, Baptist; University of Chattanooga, Methodist; and Milligan College, Christian.

*Music, Art, and Drama*—Since 1946 the world-famous Metropolitan Opera Company has been visiting Memphis for two days each spring. This is an event that is eagerly anticipated by people in the Memphis area. It plays in the spacious north hall of the municipal auditorium which has a seating capacity of some 5,000. The hall is usually filled for each opera. Memphis is the only city in Tennessee on the itinerary of the Metropolitan.

However, other Tennessee cities as well as Memphis have concert series each season which bring many stars of the opera to Tennessee. The state colleges, as well as many private colleges, offer concerts for the benefit of their students.

Nashville is the home of the Grand Old Opry, which has given to the nation a type of music that has become associated with Tennessee. This program is broadcast weekly from Nashville and undoubtedly has a large listening audience.

Roy Acuff, whose home is in Knoxville, has made mountain music famous throughout the nation. His name has become synonymous with certain types of Tennessee music.

Dinah Shore, National Broadcasting Company singing star, is from Nashville. The late Grace Moore, famous American opera star, was a Tennessee-reared singer. "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," one of the most popular songs of this century was the handiwork of Beth Slater Whitson and Alice Whitson Norton, Nashville lyricists. Beasley Smith, Nashville, composed two songs which became famous as popular music.

The most famous of all Tennessee music composers was the late W. C. Handy, Memphis Negro. Handy is nationally known as the father of the blues. St. Louis Blues, Memphis Blues, and the Beale Street Blues are his most famous works. Critics are generally agreed that the blues represent a contribution to American music and that Handy deserves a place among the greatest of the blues writers.

Memphis is also the home of Elvis Presley, the rock and roll artist, who has created waves of screaming enthusiasm among the younger generation. Presley





(Courtesy Memphis Chamber of Commerce)

*Memphis—Brooks Memorial Art Gallery*

recently completed his service in the armed forces, and his fans still appear to be legion.

Pat Boone, with a Tennessee background, gives the youth of the land a more sedate music than does Presley. The Boone version of popular music is also minus many of the gyrations that characterize the Presley contributions.

Claude Jarman, Nashville, has probably had the most important career on the stage of any Tennessean of this century. Young Jarman played in "The Yearling" and in "Intruder in the Dust." However, his career was brief and he has forsaken the motion picture industry for a business career in Nashville. Elizabeth Patterson, Savannah, is one of the most distinguished character actors in the motion picture industry. Among her better known pictures are "Intruder in the Dust," "Welcome Stranger" and "Miss Tatlock's Millions." Patricia Neal, Knoxville, has had an important role in "The Hasty Heart." "Woman In Hiding" starred among others Peggy Dow of Athens. Jerome Courtland, Knoxville, is also well known for several important roles in motion pictures.



(Courtesy Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau)

*Chattanooga—Hunter Art Gallery*

Carolyn Brenner, Memphis, has appeared several times on dramatic productions of the Columbia Broadcasting System following two years with the famous Barter Theater.

In most of the larger Tennessee cities and towns Little Theater Groups are doing a very high type of dramatic productions. The colleges are also giving excellent performances. The annual Shakespeare Festival in Memphis is sponsored by the Speech and Drama Department of Memphis State University. This festival plays before large audiences and is among the important theatrical productions each year in Memphis.

A major portion of the art contributions in Tennessee have come through the colleges and universities of the state, most of which have active art departments. The Brooks Art Gallery, located in Overton Park in Memphis, is one of the better known galleries in the state. It brings several exhibitions to Memphis each year as well as housing a permanent collection of the city. Contiguous to it is the Memphis Art Academy, which is a municipally operated art school.





(Courtesy College Publications Dept.)

*Murfreesboro—Campus and farm, Middle Tennessee State College*



*Literature*—Twentieth Century Tennesseans have contributed richly to the American literary heritage. Poetry, novels, biographies, and histories have come from the pens of Tennesseans.

Possibly the most famous group was found on the campus of Vanderbilt University in the decade of the 1920's. This group, known as the Fugitives, published a magazine of verse that was acclaimed by national critics. John Crowe Ransom, now editor of the distinguished *Kenyon Review*, was the moving spirit of this notable group. Among its members were Allan Tate, Andrew Lytle, Donald Davidson, and Robert Penn Warren. Ransom published two great volumes of verse, *Chills and Fever*, and *Two Gentlemen in Bonds*. These volumes gave Ransom a niche among the distinguished modern poets. Andrew Lytle is famous as a novelist and his novel *The Long Night* is, perhaps, his greatest effort. Allan Tate is noted as a literary critic and as a historian. Donald Davidson wrote the two volumes in the *Rivers of America* series dealing with the Tennessee River and the people of its valley. Robert Penn Warren, who later taught at Southwestern in Memphis, has achieved fame as a novelist. Richard Beaty is another Vanderbilt professor who has contributed richly to the field of American letters. Dr. Edwin Mims, professor of English at Vanderbilt, published his distinguished study, *The Advancing South*, in addition to two works on the history of Vanderbilt.

John Trotwood Moore, for many years state librarian, was a historian and novelist of no mean reputation. Two of his most famous novels, *The Bishop of Cottontown* and *Hearts of Hickory*, portray faithfully the pioneer life of Tennessee. With the late A. P. Foster, Moore wrote the good four-volume history, *Tennessee, The Volunteer State*.

The present state librarian, Dr. Daniel M. Robison, made an important contribution in his book, *Bob Taylor*.

The late Roark Bradford was a native of Halls, Tennessee. His *How Come Christmas* is generally regarded as a classic in the field of Negro dialect. *John Henry* and *This Side of Jordan* are among his better known books.

T. S. Stribling, Clifton novelist, was once the winner of the Pulitzer Prize. He is perhaps best known for his trilogy *The Store*, *The Forge*, and *Unfinished Cathedral*. His novel, *Teeftallow*, is a good description of many of the Tennessee hill folk.

Alfred Leland Crabb, professor emeritus at George Peabody College for Teachers, has selected as his repeated theme nineteenth century Nashville and the Civil War. *Dinner at Belmont* and *Home to Tennessee* are among the most favorably known of his numerous novels. He has become a truly prolific writer since giving up a long and distinguished career as a teacher.

*The Dwelling Place* is probably the most widely read book of the late Anne Goodwin Winslow of Shelby County. Mrs. Winslow lived most of her life in a beautiful old home near Raleigh. This home was the locale of her books and the scene of her writing.



Clarksville—Austin Peay State College Administration Building

Bell Irwin Wiley, native of Halls, is an important historian among Tennesseans. Dr. Wiley now teaches at Emory University. He is the author of *Southern Negroes, 1861-1865*, *The Life of Johnny Reb*, *The Life of Billy Yank*, and *The Road to Appomattox*. These books, in addition to much editorial work and many articles, have given Wiley a lasting place among historians.

Robert Selph Henry, vice president of the American Association of Railroads, is a native of Clifton. He is the author of "*First with the Most*" *Forrest*, *The Story of the Mexican War*, *The Story of the Confederacy*, and *The Story of Reconstruction*. Henry is an avocational historian who has achieved a lasting place among the professionals.

Among the leading avocational historians in the state, is Stanley Horn. Horn's *The Army of Tennessee* is perhaps the definitive book on this subject. It has not been surpassed. Horn is also the author of *The Invisible Empire*, a good study of the Ku Klux Klan.

Gerald Capers, native Memphian now teaching at Tulane University, is the



(Courtesy Kingsport Chamber of Commerce).

*Kingsport—Civic Orchestra*

author of *The Biography of a River Town*, probably the finest one volume study on Memphis that has been written.

William D. Miller, professor of history at Marquette University and formerly in the history department of Memphis State University, has written *Memphis in the Progressive Era*, a period study on the history of the state's largest city.

Among the regional studies of Tennessee may be found several works of note. Betsy Beeler Creekmore made a valuable contribution in her *Knoxville*. James Livingood and Gilbert Govan deserve an accolade for *The Chattanooga Country*, and Jesse C. Burt for *Nashville, Its Life and Times*.

Robert E. Corlew, Murfreesboro, and Emma Inman Williams, Jackson, have written two of the finest county histories that have yet been done. Mr. Corlew made a study of his home county, Dickson, and Miss Williams of Madison County.



Cartter Patten, Chattanooga, is distinguished for his *Tennessee Chronicle*, a good one-volume history of the state.

Lee N. Newcomer, Memphis State University professor, has published a fine volume on Revolutionary War Massachusetts, *The Embattled Farmer*.

Robert H. White, state historian, is presently engaged in editing the papers and messages of the governors. Five volumes of his monumental work have been published and others will appear in the near future.

Joseph H. Parks, native of Mulberry and presently professor of history at the University of Georgia, won the Southern Historical Association Award in 1956 for his excellent biography of Kirby Smith. Professor Parks is also distinguished for his books on John Bell and Felix Grundy.

Stanley J. Folmsbee, professor of history at the University of Tennessee, has contributed greatly to the history of the state in his studies in the history of the University of Tennessee, as well as his *Sectionalism and Internal Improvements in Tennessee*.

The Tennessee Historical Commission must be cited for its publishing program. It has sponsored the publication of a number of books relating to the history of the state and has encouraged the writing and publishing of local history.

This chapter has probably failed to mention a number of Tennessee writers, but it is manifestly impossible to cite every author, and every article or book that may have been written.\*

The Volunteer State has made a good contribution to the field of music, drama, art, and literature. The end is not in sight, for many Tennesseans are engaged in productive activity so that other Tennesseans may watch and read.

\* The author has refrained from discussing privately printed books and articles and monographs appearing in journals or magazines.

## CHAPTER XLVII—NOTES

1. Abernethy, *Frontier to Plantation*, 194.
2. Data on the colleges and university of the state are taken from Lovejoy's *College Guide* (New York, 1959).
3. The Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, January 10, 1960.

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